



Hot, Throbbing Dykes To Watch Out For

for Amy Rubin, for everything

Big tips o' the nib to Jess Bell and Bekah Perks, Jennifer Camper, Nina Dabek and Peggy Shannon, Pattie McManamy, Esther Sassaman, Linnea Stenson, Sarah Van Arsdale, Jane Van Buren and Deb Lashman, Jane Troxell and Lammas Books, Carrie Barnett and People Like Us Books, Lynden Kelly and A Common Language Bookstore, Rachel and Claire at Toys in Babeland, Helen Bechdel and her 24-hour reference hotline, and Nancy Bereano of Firebrand Books.

We last left
our malcontent
maidens
marinating
in a
morass of
mishigas...

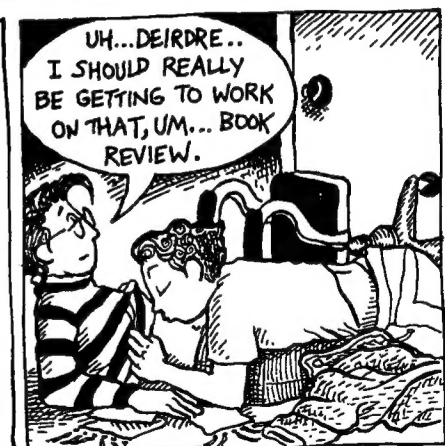
Clarice,
LOVER OF TONI,
MOM OF RAFAEL, AND
WORKAHOLIC
CRUSADER FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL
JUSTICE, HAS BEEN
NEGLECTING
HER
DOMESTIC DUTIES.
ALL OF THEM.

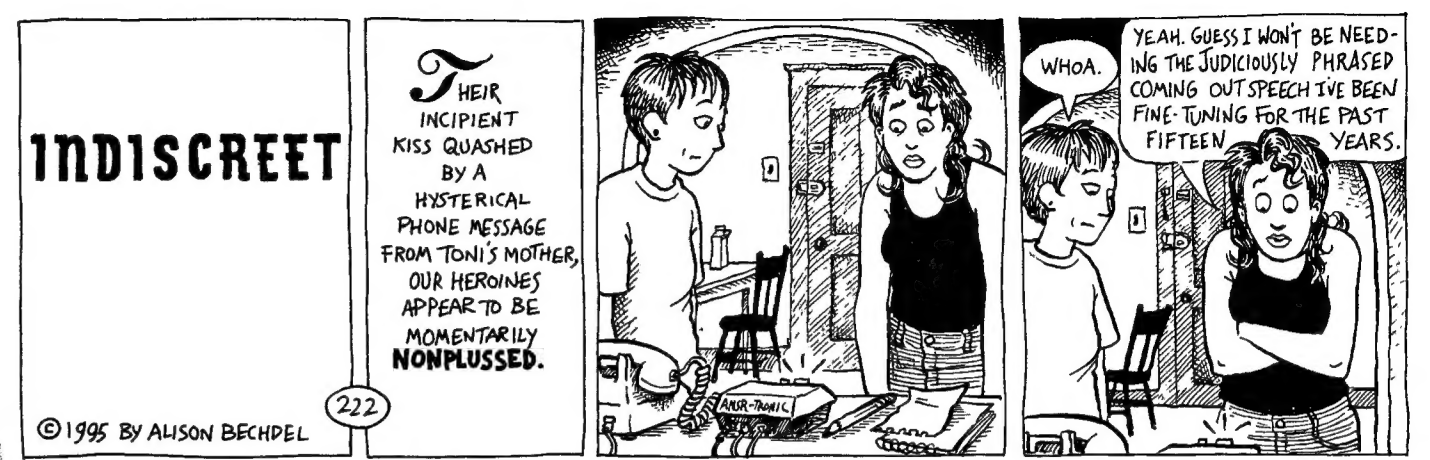
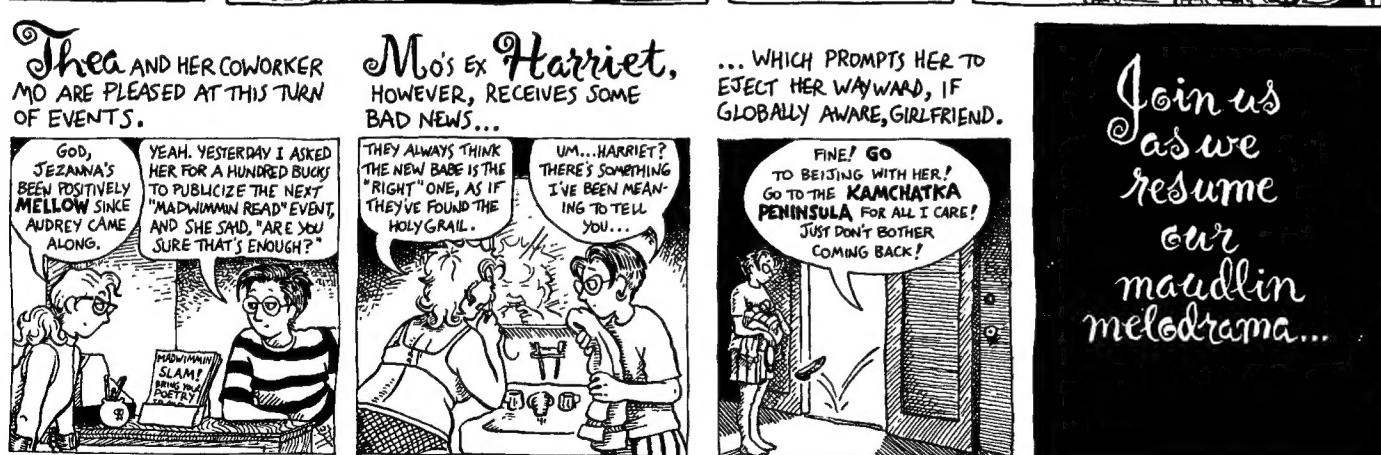
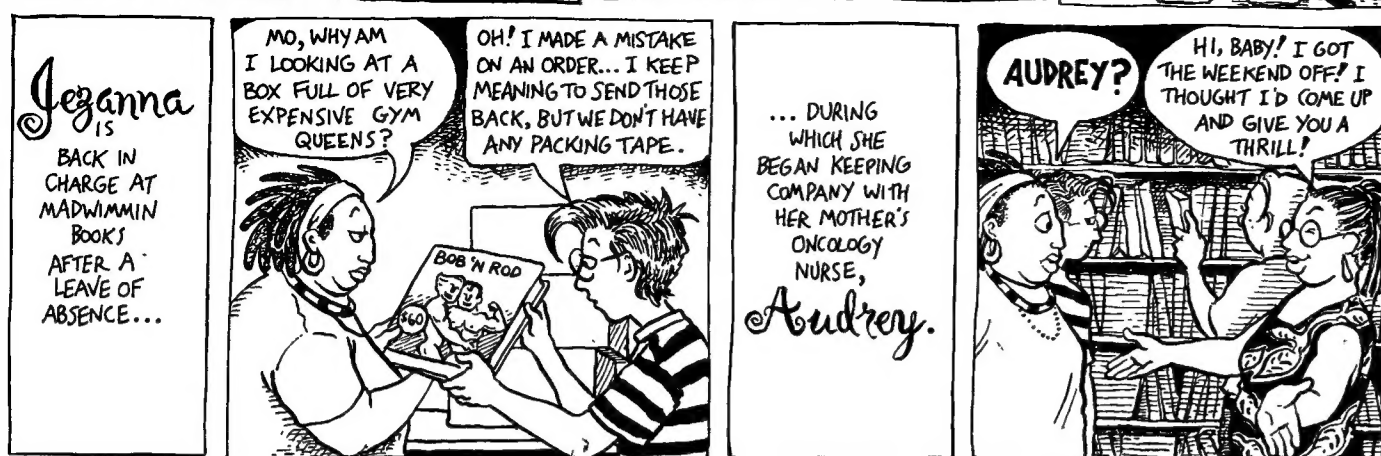
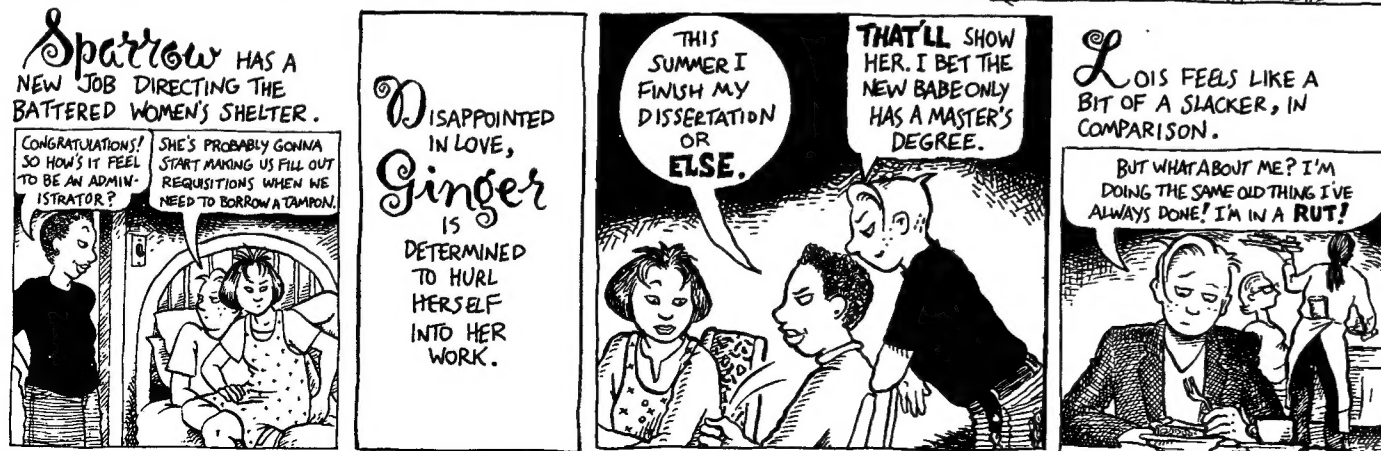
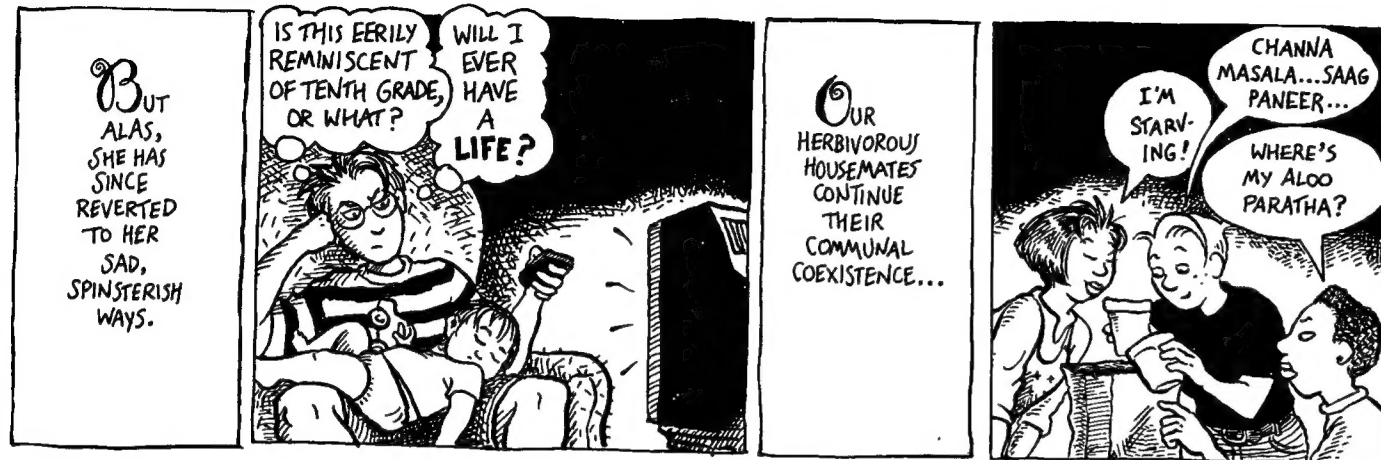


Toni,
PRESSURED ON
ALL SIDES BY HER
POSSESSIVE PARENTS,
HER PERAMBULATING
PRE-SCHOOLER, AND
HER PATHETICALLY
PERFUNCTORY PARTNER,
HAS DEVELOPED A
PROBLEMATIC PASSION
FOR HER PAL,
GLORIA.



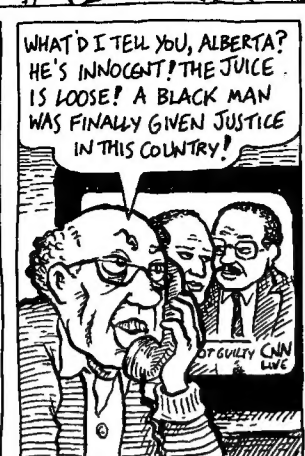
MILD-MANNERED BOOK-STORE CLERK
Me
RECENTLY
EXPERIENCED A
BRIEF BOUT OF
SEXUAL ACTIV-
ITY AT THE
HANDS (ET AL.)
OF THE
DUPlicitous
DEIRDRE...





the bridge

©1995 BY ALISON BECHDEL



mouths o' babes

©1995 BY ALISON BECHDEL

WE REJOIN OUR SORDID DOMESTIC DRAMA JUST AS CLARICE RETURNS HOME TO FIND TONI AND GLORIA IN A CLINCH!



and brains too!

Mo's SCHMOOZING WITH THE CLITERATI AFTER THE BIG MADWIMMIN POETRY SLAM.

225

©1995 BY ALISON BECHDEL

LOOK AT HER, DROOLING OVER THAT MUSCLEBOUND POET. I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE'S ATTRACTED TO SOMEONE WHO MISUSES 'LAY' FOR 'LIE' IN AN EROTIC POEM, FOR GODSAKES.

YEAH. I HAD A REAL BONER FOR BEATRICE ONCE. UNTIL I ACTUALLY HAD A CONVERSATION WITH HER.



TIP: THE NIB TO LOUISE RAKIN!



YOU WERE JUST GREAT, BEATRICE. I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU DIDN'T WIN.

YEAH. I KNEW I SHOULD'VE WORN ANOTHER OUTFIT.



I DON'T KNOW WHY THAT ONE JUDGE KEPT GIVING YOU SUCH A LOW SCORE.

MAYBE I SHOULD'VE WAITED TILL AFTER TONIGHT TO DUMP HER.



OH. SO YOU'RE SINGLE, THEN?

HEY, BEA!

'SCUSE ME, MO. I HAFTA TALK TO THESE PEOPLE.



SHE SAID MY NAME!

SO, HAS THE DISILLUSIONMENT SUNK IN YET?



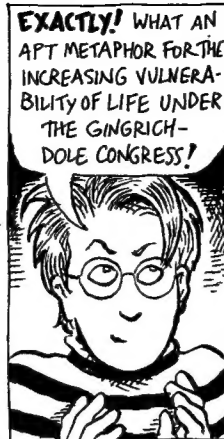
HUH? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

I'M TALKING ABOUT THAT BYRONIC-PROFILED FLUFF-FOR-BRAINS YOU'VE BEEN PANTING AFTER.

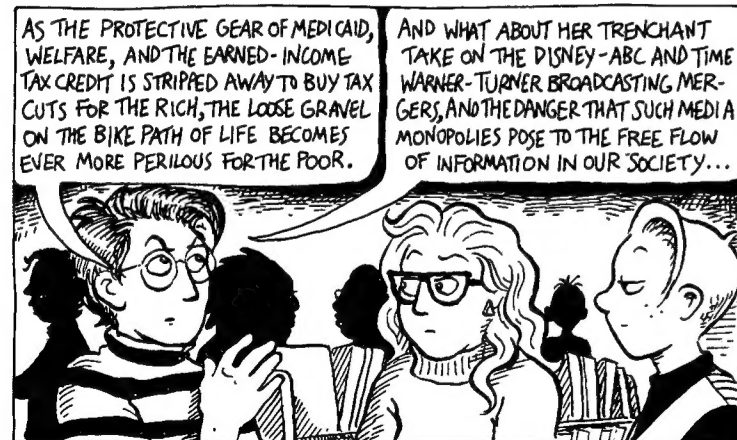


BEATRICE? ARE YOU KIDDING? SHE'S BRILLIANT!

WHAT?! COME ON, MO. SHE READ A POEM CALLED "ROLLERBLADING NAKED!"



EXACTLY! WHAT AN APT METAPHOR FOR THE INCREASING VULNERABILITY OF LIFE UNDER THE GINGRICH-DOLE CONGRESS!



AS THE PROTECTIVE GEAR OF MEDICAID, WELFARE, AND THE EARNED-INCOME TAX CREDIT IS STRIPPED AWAY TO BUY TAX CUTS FOR THE RICH, THE LOOSE GRAVEL ON THE BIKE PATH OF LIFE BECOMES EVER MORE PERILOUS FOR THE POOR.

AND WHAT ABOUT HER TRENCANT TAKE ON THE DISNEY-ABC AND TIME WARNER-TURNER BROADCASTING MERGERS, AND THE DANGER THAT SUCH MEDIA MONOPOLIES POSE TO THE FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION IN OUR SOCIETY...



"WE WALKED OUT OF POCAHONTAS, WENT HOME, AND WATCHED CNN. THERE WAS NOTHING HAPPENING ANYWHERE!" WOMAN'S A GENIUS.

HORMONAL IMBALANCE DUE TO PROLONGED SEXUAL INACTIVITY AND AFFECTING THE JUDGMENT. IT'S OUT OF OUR HANDS.

Pajama Party

©1995 BY ALISON BECHDEL



ARE YOU SURE THIS IS OKAY? WE COULD STOP BY AFTER DINNER AND PICK HIM UP.

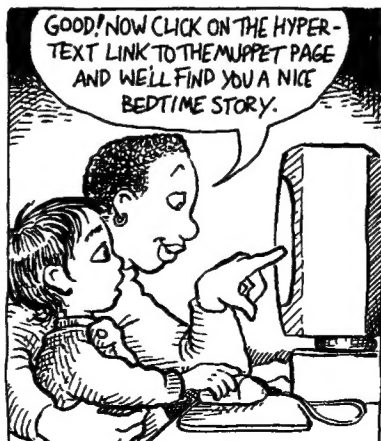
NO WAY! THE WHOLE POINT IS FOR YOU GUYS TO HAVE A NIGHT ALONE. NOW GET OUTTA HERE!

HEY, RAFFER!



I DUNNO, TONI. HE'S NEVER SLEPT AWAY FROM HOME BEFORE. D'YOU THINK HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT?

HE'LL BE FINE. I'M MORE WORRIED ABOUT SPARROW, GINGER, AND LOIS. AT LEAST THERE'S THREE OF THEM.



GOOD! NOW CLICK ON THE HYPER-TEXT LINK TO THE MUPPET PAGE AND WE'LL FIND YOU A NICE BEDTIME STORY.



ANY NEWS FROM HOMOPHOBIA CENTRAL? OR IS YOUR MOTHER STILL NOT SPEAKING TO YOU?

CARMEN WENT OVER LAST NIGHT TO RUN INTERFERENCE. SHE SAYS MOM'S MOUTH HAS STOPPED FOAMING.



SHOULDN'T HE BE WINDING DOWN ABOUT NOW?

WOOF! DOGGY EAT!

YIP!



CLARICE, WHAT HAPPENED WITH GLORIA WAS TOTALLY CRAZY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO HURT YOU.

IT'S MY OWN FAULT. I'VE BEEN SO DISTANT AND WRAPPED UP IN MY WORK. I'M SURPRISED YOU DIDN'T LEAVE ME MONTHS AGO.



LOIS!

RELAX! IT'S NON-TOXIC, NON-STAINING, AND CONTAINS NATURAL FLAVORING.



GOD, IT'S WEIRD NOT HAVING RAFFI HERE. UH... I FEEL AWKWARD, PLANNING TO HAVE SEX LIKE THIS. MAYBE WE SHOULD RELAX WITH SOME TV FIRST...

CLARICE, IT'S BEEN FIVE MONTHS! I'M NOT WASTING ONE MORE SECOND ON MARY TYLER MOORE.



HOW ARE WE GOING TO EXPLAIN THE DRIED LUBE IN HIS HAIR?

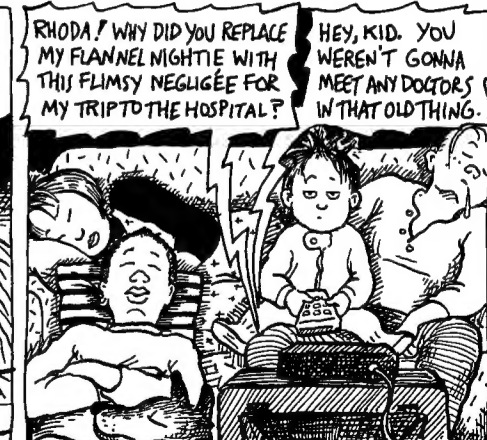
EEK! NO THAMPOO!

JESUS. NO WONDER CLARICE AND TONI ARE ON THE SKIDS.



CLARICE! WHAT IS THIS?!

IT'S... YOU KNOW... KIND OF A NIGHTGOWN, I GUESS. I THOUGHT IT MIGHT HELP. D'YOU LIKE IT?

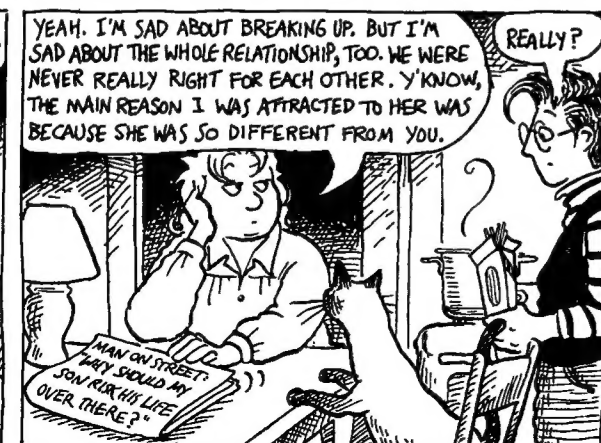


RHODA! WHY DID YOU REPLACE MY FLANNEL NIGHTIE WITH THIS FLIMSY NEGLEGEE FOR MY TRIP TO THE HOSPITAL?

HEY, KID. YOU WEREN'T GONNA MEET ANY DOCTORS IN THAT OLD THING.

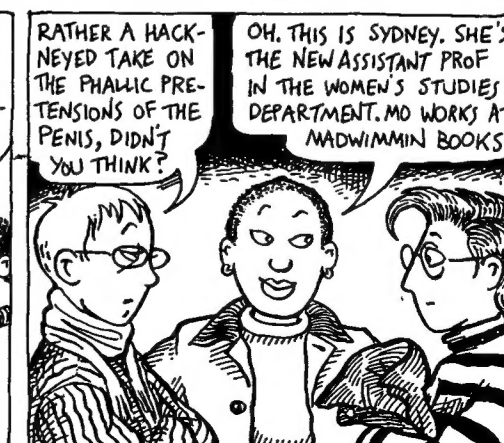
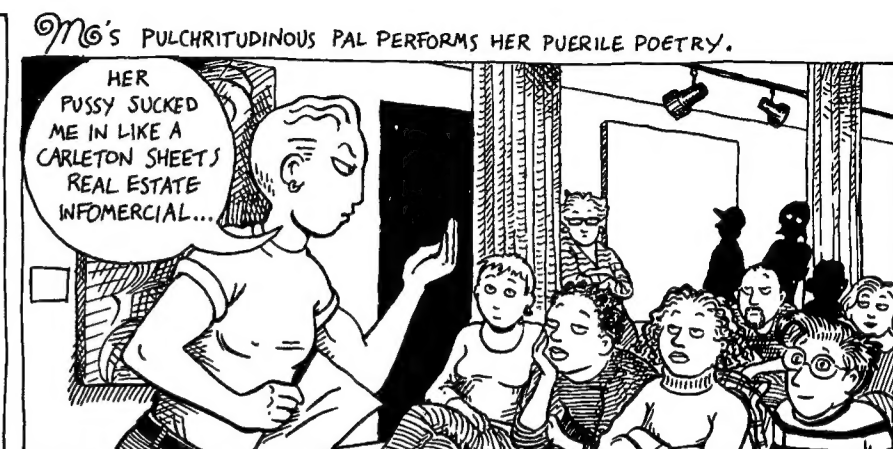
THE fundamental things apply

©1995 BY ALISON BECHDEL



Poetic Justice

©1995 BY ALISON BECHDEL

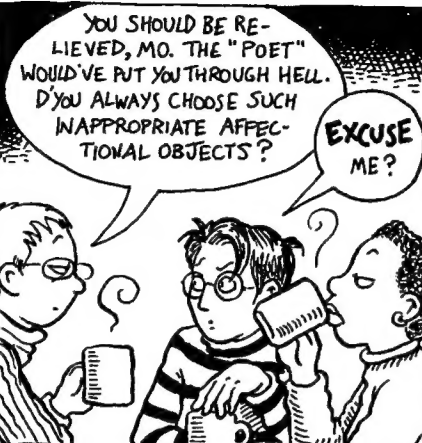


DOUBLE NEGATIVE

©1995 BY ALISON BECHDEL

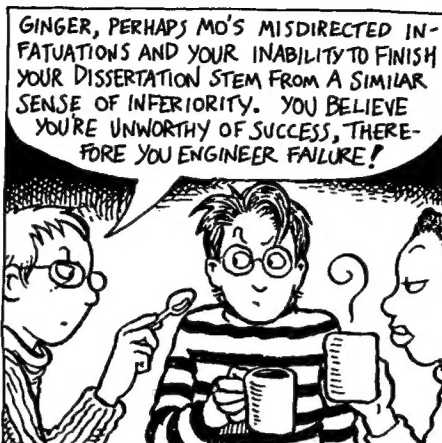
229

UNLUCKY IN LOVE YET AGAIN, MO SEEKS SOLACE WITH GINGER AND SYDNEY, THE NEW ASSISTANT PROFESSOR.



YOU SHOULD BE RELIEVED, MO. THE "POET" WOULD'VE PUT YOU THROUGH HELL. D'YOU ALWAYS CHOOSE SUCH INAPPROPRIATE AFFECTIONAL OBJECTS?

EXCUSE ME?



GINGER, PERHAPS MO'S MISDIRECTED INFATUATIONS AND YOUR INABILITY TO FINISH YOUR DISSERTATION STEM FROM A SIMILAR SENSE OF INFERIORITY. YOU BELIEVE YOU'RE UNWORTHY OF SUCCESS, THEREFORE YOU ENGINEER FAILURE!



SYDNEY, HAS ANYONE EVER TOLD YOU YOU'RE FULL OF SHIT?

YES. ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY KNOW I'M RIGHT.



HEY! THIS MALAYSIAN SUPREMO TASTES LIKE IT'S BEEN PERCOLATING ALL THE WAY FROM KUALA LUMPUR. COULD I GET SOME FRESH BREWED?

GINGER, WHAT IS UP WITH THIS BABE? SHE'S UN-BEARABLE!

OH, YOU KNOW HER TYPE. SHE JUST LIKES TO PROVOKE. IF YOU WANT TO SHUT HER UP, ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS AGREE WITH HER.



MEANWHILE...

NO! NO WANNOO GO TO SLEEP! WANNOO PUT BOOTS ON!

RAFFI, COME ON! NO MORE FOOLING AROUND. YOU CAN'T WEAR YOUR BOOTS TO BED. NOW LIE DOWN!



NO! BOOTS NOW!

OH, MAN. IT'S ONE OF THOSE NIGHTS. WHO WAS ON THE PHONE?

CARMEN. SHE SAYS MY MOM THREW OUT THE PFLAG STUFF I SENT.



OH, TONI. I'M SORRY.

HONEY, I KNOW YOU'RE CRAZED WITH WORK, BUT I THINK IT'S TIME TO APPLY FOR SECOND-PARENT ADOPTION. I WANT RAFFI TO HAVE A LEGALLY PROTECTED FAMILY.

BOOTS!



RAFFI, NO BOOTS. SLEEP!

HEY, LET'S NOT TURN THIS INTO A SHOWDOWN. IT'S OKAY TO GO ALONG WITH HIM ON THE LITTLE THINGS. IT SHOWS WE RESPECT HIS IDEAS.

I'LL GET YOUR BOOTS, RAFFI.



NO BOOTS! HUNGWY! WANNA BANANA, NOW!

NICE PARENTING SKILLS, TONI. IT'S A GOOD THING WE'RE NOT APPLYING FOR FIRST-PARENT ADOPTION.



WHAT A GODFORSAKEN TOWN. NO POTABLE COFFEE! NO DECENT NEWSPAPER, NO ORIGINAL THINKING...

YEP! IT'S JUST ONE BIG OLE CULTURAL WASTE-LAND!

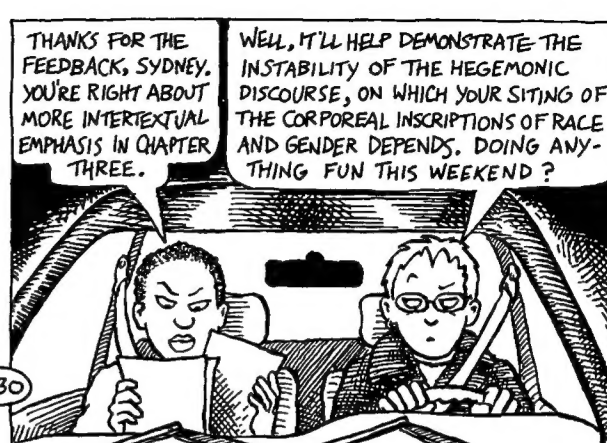


YOU AGREE WITH ME, YET YOU CHOOSE TO STAY? HOW INTERESTING! SOUNDS LIKE ANOTHER WAY OF SABOTAGING YOURSELF! I KNOW IT'S SO EIGHTIES, BUT HAVE YOU TRIED THERAPY?

writer's blockade

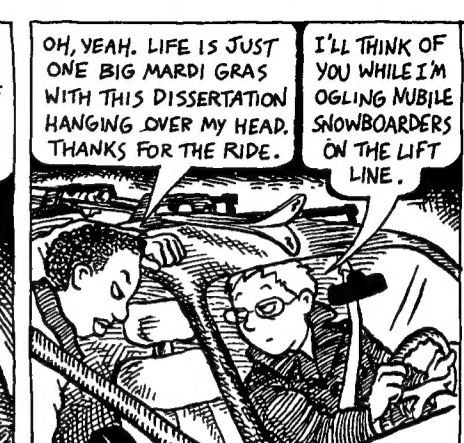
©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

230



THANKS FOR THE FEEDBACK, SYDNEY. YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT MORE INTERTEXTUAL EMPHASIS IN CHAPTER THREE.

WELL, IT'LL HELP DEMONSTRATE THE INSTABILITY OF THE HEGEMONIC DISCOURSE, ON WHICH YOUR SITING OF THE CORPOREAL INSCRIPTIONS OF RACE AND GENDER DEPENDS. DOING ANYTHING FUN THIS WEEKEND?



OH, YEAH. LIFE IS JUST ONE BIG MARDI GRAS WITH THIS DISSERTATION HANGING OVER MY HEAD. THANKS FOR THE RIDE.

I'LL THINK OF YOU WHILE I'M OGGLING NUBILE SNOWBOARDERS ON THE LIFT LINE.



WON'T YOU TAKE ME TO...



FUNKY TOW... HEY! CLIK!



OH, HI, GINGER.

WHY'D YOU TURN THE MUSIC OFF?

BECAUSE UNLIKE YOU SLACKERS, I HAVE WORK TO DO! GOD! IT'S LIKE LIVING WITH MY STUDENTS!

GINGER, IT'S FRIDAY! WE'RE JUST UNWINDING!



NO! IT'S LIKE LIVING WITH MY FRAT BOY STUDENTS! LOIS, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?

GETTING READY FOR THE BIG DRAG KING CONTEST AT CLUB Q. WHAT DO YOU THINK? DO I PASS?

FOR A HIRSTUTE CUB SCOUT.



I'M SICK OF THIS PLACE! HOW'M I SUPPOSED TO THINK IN THIS CHAOS? HOW'M I SUPPOSED TO WRITE SURROUNDED BY LAYABOUTS AND ANTI-INTELLECTUALS?



AND IF I HAVE TO LISTEN TO YOU HAVING SEX TO-NIGHT, HOMEBODY, I'LL SLICE YOUR EIGHTY-DOLLAR SILICONE SCHLONG LENGTHWISE AND WRAP IT AROUND YOUR WAIST!



STOMP STOMP STOMP SLAM!

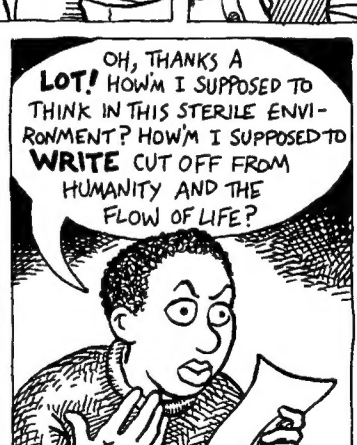


ONE HOUR OF FRUITLESS STARING LATER...

NOW WHAT ARE THEY UP TO? I DON'T HEAR A THING!



Dear Ginger: We're gone for the whole weekend. The house is clean and there's a pot of chili in the fridge. All you have to do is write. Love, your housemates



OH, THANKS A LOT! HOW'M I SUPPOSED TO THINK IN THIS STERILE ENVIRONMENT? HOW'M I SUPPOSED TO WRITE CUT OFF FROM HUMANITY AND THE FLOW OF LIFE?



WHAT ARE YOU LAUGHING AT? LET'S NOT FORGET WHOSE DISCOURSE IS HEGEMONIC AROUND HERE.

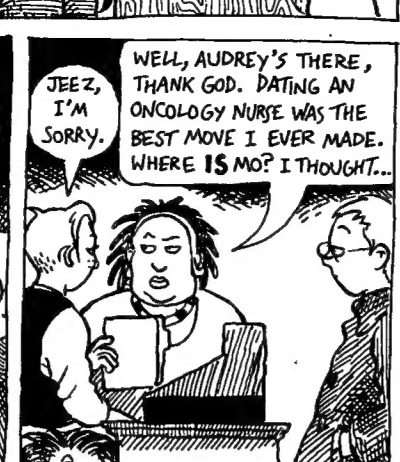
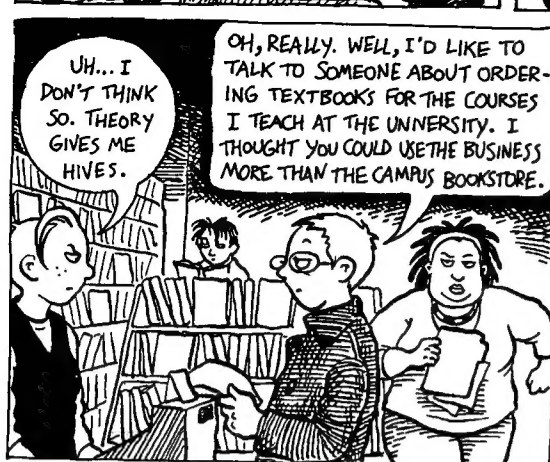
face to face

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

IN THE OFFICE OF MADWIMMIN BOOKS...



MEANWHILE, UP AT THE REGISTER.



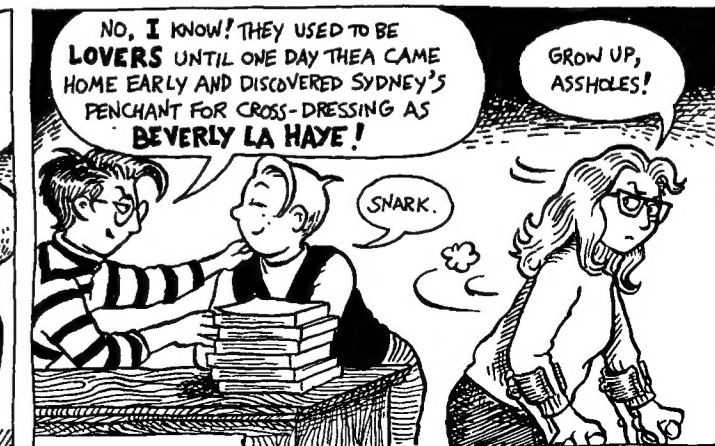
A Smidge Too Far

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

IN OUR LAST TEMPESTUOUS EPISODE, THEA APPEARED TO HAVE HAD A PRIOR ACQUAINTANCE WITH A PARTICULAR POMPOUS PROFESSOR.



BUT AFTER SYDNEY LEAVES, THEA IS A TAD RETICENT WITH THE DETAILS.



INDECENT PROPOSAL

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

233

THIS EPISODE OF **IS** TO WATCH OUT FOR COMES TO YOU IN OUR NEW **CYBER-READY** FORMAT!

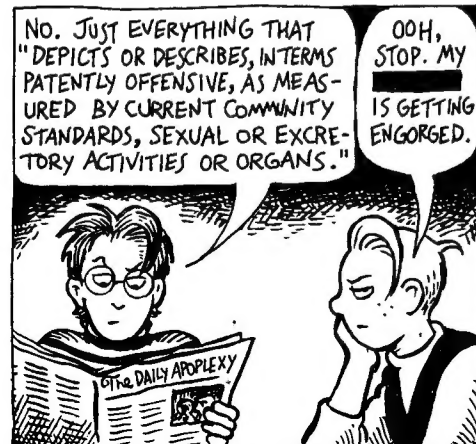


WHAT THE **██**?! DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THIS TELECOMMUNICATIONS BILL THAT CLINTON JUST SIGNED?



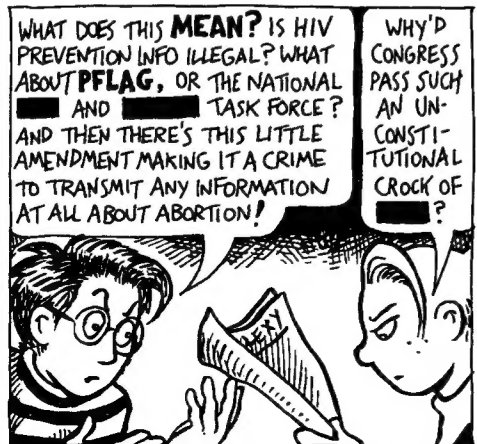
ANYONE WHO PUTS "INDECENT" MATERIAL ON THE INTERNET CAN GET A \$250,000 FINE AND TWO YEARS IN PRISON!

COOL. DOES THAT MEAN ALL THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES' WEB SITES WILL COME DOWN?



NO. JUST EVERYTHING THAT "DEPICTS OR DESCRIBES, IN TERMS PATENTLY OFFENSIVE, AS MEASURED BY CURRENT COMMUNITY STANDARDS, SEXUAL OR EXCRETORY ACTIVITIES OR ORGANS."

OOH, STOP. MY **██** IS GETTING ENGORGED.



WHAT DOES THIS **MEAN**? IS HIV PREVENTION INFO ILLEGAL? WHAT ABOUT **PFLAG**, OR THE NATIONAL **██** AND **██** TASK FORCE? AND THEN THERE'S THIS LITTLE AMENDMENT MAKING IT A CRIME TO TRANSMIT ANY INFORMATION AT ALL ABOUT ABORTION!

WHY'D CONGRESS PASS SUCH AN UNCONSTITUTIONAL CROCK OF **██**?



"TO PROTECT THE CHILDREN" FROM ONLINE PORN. IT'S AN ELECTION YEAR, REMEMBER?

EVEN SO, IT SEEMS LIKE AN EXTREME WAY TO KEEP LITTLE KAITLIN AND CODY OUT OF **ALT. SEX.FETISH.FEET**. WHATEVER HAPPENED TO "LESS GOVERNMENT?"



OH, DON'T WORRY! THE REST OF THE BILL **DEREGULATES** THE WHOLE INDUSTRY! SOON WE'LL BE LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES OF **AT&T**!

WELL **██** A DUCK.



MEANWHILE... HEY, SPORT! ISN'T IT A LITTLE COLD FOR THAT OUTFIT?

MEEMA!

EVERY TIME I TURN AROUND, HE'S UNRESSED AGAIN!



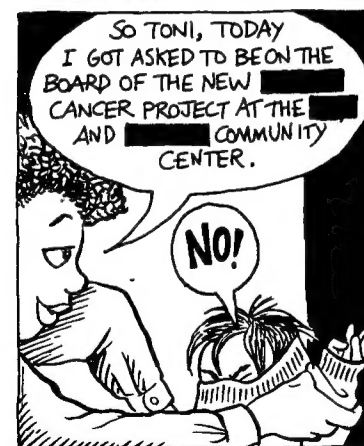
HI, BABY!

MMM. HI.



LET'S GET YOUR CLOTHES ON, OKAY, RAFFI?

TRY PUTTING HIS OVERALLS ON BACKWARDS SO HE CAN'T UNDO THEM.



SO TONI, TODAY I GOT ASKED TO BE ON THE BOARD OF THE NEW **██** CANCER PROJECT AT THE **██** AND **██** COMMUNITY CENTER.

NO!



THAT'S NICE. DID YOU TELL THEM YOU WEREN'T A GOOD CANDIDATE BECAUSE YOU NEVER DO YOUR MONTHLY **██** SELF-EXAM?

I DO TOO! SOME TIMES.

RAFFI! COME HERE!



SHORTLY...

THERE. VELCROED, SNAPPED, AND HOOKED. HOUDINI COULDN'T GET OUT OF THIS.



MEEMA! HAFTA GO

Seeing Pink

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

234

THANKS FOR THE RIDE. SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO COME TO THE READING? EVEN IF YOU DON'T LIKE MIKO'S BOOK, YOU'LL MEET A LOT OF NEW PEOPLE.

NAH. I HAVE A TON OF PAPERS TO GRADE.

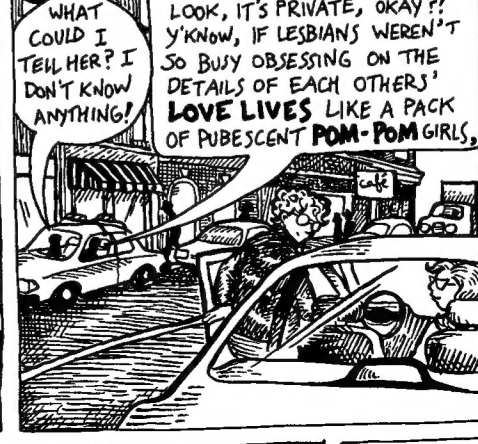
SINCE WHEN HAVE A FEW PAPERS STOPPED YOU FROM... OH, I GET IT! YOU'RE AFRAID OF RUNNING INTO THEA, AREN'T YOU? WELL, LOOK. SHE'S LEAVING. YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THEA AND ME?



NOTHING! LOIS WAS PUMPING ME FOR INFORMATION THE OTHER NIGHT ABOUT HOW YOU TWO KNOW EACH OTHER. IS IT SOME BIG SECRET?

WHAT'D YOU TELL HER?!



WHAT COULD I TELL HER? I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING!

LOOK, IT'S PRIVATE, OKAY? I KNOW, IF LESBIANS WEREN'T SO BUSY OBSESSING ON THE DETAILS OF EACH OTHERS' **LOVE LIVES** LIKE A PACK OF PUBESCENT **POM-POM** GIRLS,



... MAYBE WE'D BE MAKING A LITTLE MORE HEADWAY AGAINST ALL THE WHITE-SUPREMACIST, BIOCHIP-IMPLANT-CONSPIRACY-THEORISTS WHO WANT **PAT BUCHANAN** TO MAKE THE TRAINS RUN ON TIME!

LOVE LIVES? SO WERE YOU AND THEA AN ITEM?



A BIT LATER... CONGRATULATIONS, MIKO! I HOPE THE BOOK DOESN'T DO **TOO** WELL. I DON'T KNOW **WHAT** I'D DO IF YOU EVER QUIT CUTTING HAIR!

UH... THANKS, JOSIE.



SO FAR TONIGHT, TEN CLIENTS HAVE TOLD ME THAT.

KEEP SMILING. I'LL GO FRESHEN UP YOUR SELTZER.



ACTUALLY, I'M GLAD TO SEE BUCHANAN GETTING A GOOD TURNOUT. HE KEEPS THE REPUBLICANS OFF-BALANCE, AND HE'S SUCH A **LUNATIC**. HE'LL NEVER GET ELECTED.

HEY, MO! HOW'S IT GOING?



DID YOU HEAR THAT? IT IS **SO** IRRESPONSIBLE TO DISMISS THAT FASCIST AS 'FRINGE.' NEXT THING YOU KNOW, HE'LL BE GOOSESTEPPING INTO THE **OV**AL OFFICE!



IF PROGRESSIVES WEREN'T SO BUSY **RATIONALIZING** OVER WINE AND CHEESE, MAYBE WE'D ACTUALLY BE MAKING SOME HEADWAY AGAINST THE SWELLING RANKS OF ARYAN NATION **UZI FREAKS** WHO WANT **PAT BUCHANAN** TO BE THEIR GENERALISSIMO!



WELL, YOU HAVE TO ADMIT, HIS ATTACK ON BIG BUSINESS HAS TOUCHED A POPULIST NERVE.

OH, PLEASE! HE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT WORKERS! HE'S JUST PREYING ON PEOPLES' FINANCIAL INSECURITY TO FUEL HIS BIGOTED, IMMIGRANT-BASHING AGENDA! BUCHANAN'S HATE-MONGERING SERVES CORPORATE INTERESTS MORE THAN STEVE FORBES COULD EVER **HOPE** TO WITH HIS FLATULENT **FLAT TAX**!



WHY'D YOU BAIT HER LIKE THAT?

DON'T HER EARS TURN AN ENTRANING SALMON HUE WHEN SHE'S APOPLECTIC?

the ties that chafe

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL 235

JEZANNA ("ALBERTA" TO HER FOLKS) IS AT THE HOSPITAL.

LOOKS LIKE I'LL BE VOTIN' FOR THAT SORRY-ASS CLINTON AGAIN. THESE SPAM-HEAD REPUBLICANS ARE EVEN MORE WORTHLESS THAN HE IS.

YEAH. PAINFUL AS IT IS, I HAVE TO AGREE WITH YOU.

WHAT'S SO PAINFUL? VOTING FOR CLINTON, OR AGREEING WITH YOUR FATHER?

BOTH, MOST LIKELY. SHE'S JUST THAT CONTRARY.

I LIKE A LITTLE CONTRARIETY IN A WOMAN. SHE TAKES AFTER YOU.

WELL, MAYBE. BUT JUST YOU WATCH OUT FOR HER TEMPER.

MAMA, MOTHER THERE'S A WOULD LOSE HER TEMPER AROUND YOU. WILL YOU STOP RUNNING ME DOWN TO AUDREY?

YOU SEE HOW SHE TALKS TO ME?

Y'KNOW, IF THESE SPAM-HEADS EVER TRIED SOLVING THE COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS INSTEAD OF MESSING WITH MATTERS THAT DON'T CONCERN THEM, MAYBE YOU TWO COULD GET MARRIED GOOD AND PROPER SOME DAY.

ALL I KNOW IS, YOU'RE LUCKY YOU FOUND THIS GIRL, ALBERTA. NO MAN WOULD PUT UP WITH YOU.

21 STATES INTRODUCE BILLS BLOCKING RECOGNITION OF GAY MARRIAGE

"MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE ON OUR DOCKET," SAYS RADICAL RIGHT

SOAK IT UP, BABE. I THINK THIS IS THE CLOSEST WE GET TO AN ACTUAL BLESSING.

MEANWHILE, BACK IN RIVER CITY...

SO DID YOU FIND OUT WHY YOUR DAD CALLED LAST NIGHT?

I'M SURE HE JUST WANTED TO BROW-BEAT ME INTO GOING STRAIGHT TO APEASE MY MOTHER.

ARE YOU GONNA CALL THEM BACK OR WHAT?

I TRIED EARLIER AND NO ONE WAS HOME. THEY'RE PROBABLY OUT HIRING A DEPROGRAMMER TO COME RESCUE ME FROM MY WICKED SURROUNDINGS.

YOU MAKE THEM OUT TO BE THESE RABID FANATICS, TONI. THEY'RE JUST REGULAR PEOPLE, A LITTLE WIGGED OUT BY THEIR DYKE DAUGHTER, IS ALL.

CLARICE, MY OWN MOTHER, FLESH OF MY FLESH, THINKS I'M THE ANTICHRIST! WELL, YOU KNOW WHAT? I DON'T NEED THAT KIND OF MEANNESS IN MY LIFE, AND I DON'T WANT MY CHILD EXPOSED TO IT!

BABE, I KNOW IT'S REALLY PAINFUL FOR YOU, BUT...

DAMN RIGHT IT IS! WHY SHOULD I KEEP REACHING OUT, ONLY TO GET REJECTED AGAIN AND AGAIN? I'VE HAD IT! SHE DOESN'T WANT TO TALK TO ME? FINE! I'LL NEVER SPEAK TO HER AGAIN!

HEH-WO? HI!

RAFFI, PLEASE DON'T PLAY WITH THE PHONE. IT'S NOT A TOY.

TONI, CAN YOU GRAB IT FROM HIM?

RAFFI! ARE YOU TALKING TO SOMEONE?

ANNH!

mmmm

HELLO?

¿¡HOLA?! ANTONIA?!

MAMA?! WHAT ARE YOU DOING ON THE LINE?

SOMETHING TELLS ME OUR LITTLE HELLION JUST DISCOVERED THE 'REDIAL' BUTTON.

guess who's coming to dinner

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL 236

THROUGH AN UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT INVOLVING RAFAEL AND THE REDIAL BUTTON, TONI IS STARTLED TO FIND HERSELF ON THE PHONE WITH THE VERY MOTHER SHE ONLY MOMENTS AGO VOWED NEVER TO SPEAK TO AGAIN.

WHINE!

OH, THAT'S RAFFI! CLARICE IS JUST TAKING HIM OFF FOR HIS BATH.

I AM?

YEAH, IT'S AMAZING. HE'S GROWING SO FAST! EVERY DAY HE DOES SOMETHING HE COULDN'T JUST THE DAY BEFORE.

COME, MY LITTLE HELLSPAWN. IT'S TIME FOR YOUR HOSE-DOWN.

No!

WELL, SURE. I'D LIKE YOU TO SEE HIM TOO. I MEAN, HE IS YOUR GRANDCHILD... OH, MAMA! I DON'T THINK SO! SAN JUAN'S AN AWFUL LONG WAY TO TRAVEL WITH A TODDLER. AND BESIDES, UM... I DON'T THINK CLARICE COULD GET AWAY FROM WORK.

...BECAUSE I WANT HER TO COME, THAT'S WHY! SHE'S RAFFI'S PARENT TOO! SHE'S MY FAMILY, AND YOU HAVE TO LEARN TO DEAL WITH IT.

MAMA... MAMA! I'M PAYING PEAK LONG-DISTANCE RATES HERE. COULD YOU SAVE THE HAIL MARYS UNTIL WE HANG UP?

MEANWHILE, OVER AT THE OLDEST EXTANT GROUP HOUSEHOLD IN LESBIANDOM...

SYDNEY'S ATTRACTED TO MO? GET OUTTA HERE! MO CAN'T STAND HER!

THUMP!

WAIT! IT GETS BETTER. YOU KNOW HOW YOU WERE TRYING TO FIND OUT THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SYDNEY AND YOUR ESTEEMED COLLEAGUE, THEA? EXES.

OH, NICE WORK! HOW DO YOU KNOW? DID SYDNEY SAY SO?

NO, BUT I COULD TELL BY THE LOOK IN HER EYES AS SHE WAS DENYING IT. SEE FOR YOURSELF. SHE'S COMING OVER FOR DINNER.

YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT? I INVITED MO FOR DINNER. SHE'LL BE HERE ANY MINUTE!

REALLY? WELL, THIS SHOULD BE AN INTERESTING MEAL...

SHALL WE SLIP SPANISH FLY INTO THE STUFFED SQUASH, OR SALT PETER INTO THE SOY SAUCE?

BACK AT TH' RANCH, TONI'S OFF THE PHONE...

CLARICE, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IF I TOLD YOU I JUST INVITED MY PARENTS TO COME VISIT?

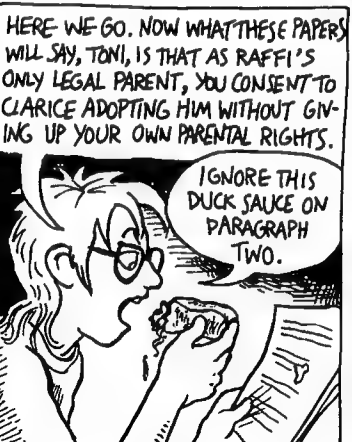
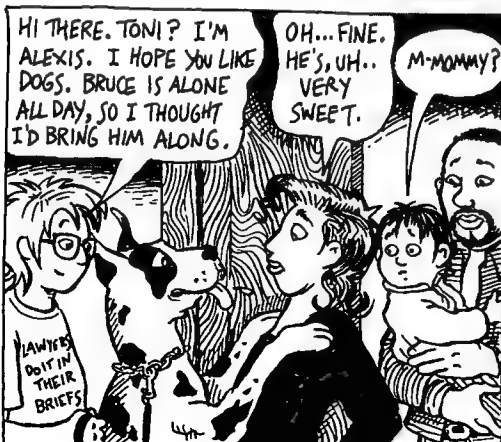
I'D SAY ARE YOU INCANE?

UH... TEMPORARILY, IT SEEMS. IS THE THIRD WEEK IN JULY OKAY WITH YOU?

PERFECT. IF WE START RIGHT NOW, WE CAN BE PACKED AND OUTTA HERE BEFORE THEIR FLIGHT LANDS.

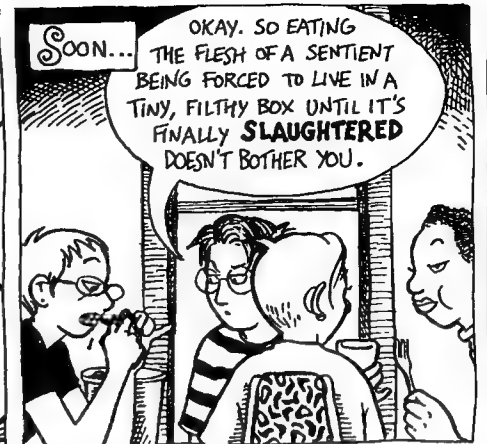
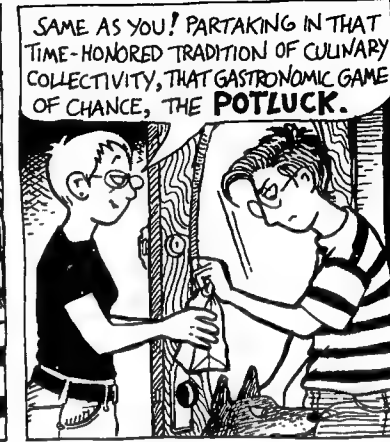
legal beagle

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL



Wing Ding

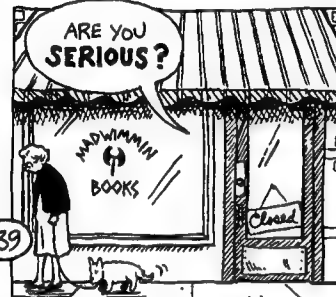
©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL



ill humor

© 1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

OUR STEADFAST CULTURAL WORKERS ARE ENGAGED IN A RATHER GRIM STAFF MEETING...



IF YOU RAISE OUR DEDUCTIBLE TO A THOUSAND DOLLARS, WE MIGHT AS WELL NOT EVEN HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE!

I KNOW. IT MAKES ME SICK. I FEEL A MORAL OBLIGATION TO INSURE MY EMPLOYEES, BUT THE FACT IS, WE'RE NOT DOING VERY WELL. I HAVE TO CUT EXPENSES AND THIS IS THE ONLY THING LEFT TO CUT.



IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF BUNNS AND NOODLE, ISN'T IT? WE'RE LOSING SALES TO THAT BIG *&#@ SUPERSTORE!

IT'S NOT JUST THAT. THE INDUSTRY IS CHANGING. THE WHOLE CULTURE IS CHANGING. I'M JUST TRYING TO KEEP UP.

JEZ, I JUST WANT TO SAY ONE WORD TO YOU. JUST ONE WORD.



ARE YOU LISTENING? SILICONE.

LOIS!



BUNNS AND NOODLE MIGHT CARRY LESBIAN EROTICA, BUT THEY DON'T SELL THE HARDWARE.

ALL RIGHT. WHY DON'T YOU PUT SOME NUMBERS TOGETHER FOR ME. BUT IN THE MEANTIME, OUR DEDUCTIBLE GOES UP.



THERE'S A GREAT FUTURE IN SEX TOYS. THINK ABOUT IT. WILL YOU THINK ABOUT IT?

LATER...



IF YOU PROMISE NOT TO SPRING ANY FLESH-EATING ACADEMICS ON ME, I COULDN'T HANDLE SYDNEY TONIGHT.

HEY ASSHOLE! DIDN'T THAT LEXUS COME WITH A TURN SIGNAL?!

HE'S ON HIS @\$\$! CAR PHONE. PROBABLY TELLING HIS BROKER TO BUY MORE BUNNS AND NOODLE STOCK. THE SLEEK BASTARD. I BET HE'S GOT HEALTH INSURANCE UP THE WAZOO!



LATER STILL...



SLAM!

SIGH!

SPARROW?

I AM SO WIPED. I HAD TO LAY OFF SOMEONE ELSE TODAY, AND OUR FOOD BUDGET IS DOWN TO ZERO. WE'VE GOT EIGHT WOMEN AND ELEVEN KIDS LIVING ON PANCAKES AND GOVERNMENT-SURPLUS CHEESE.



I'M RUNNING A BATTERED WOMEN'S SHELTER ON A SHOESTRING, AND McDONALD'S GETS HALF-A-MILLION BUCKS OF TAXPAYERS' MONEY TO ADVERTISE CHICKEN McNUGGETS IN TURKEY! IT MAKES ME SICK!



NOT QUITE AS BAD AS WE THOUGHT.

ACTUALLY, WE'D BE SICK TOO, BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD IT.



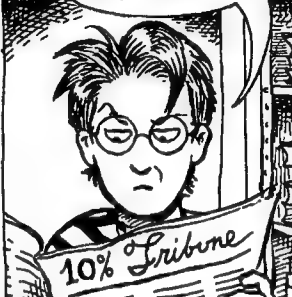
the p word

© 1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

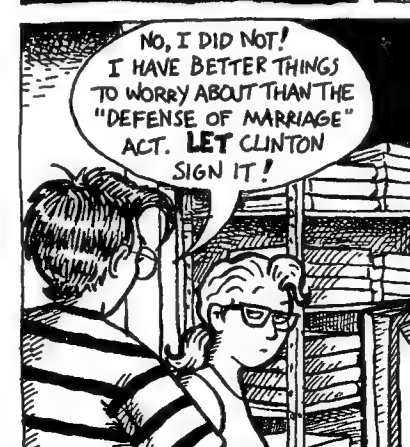
WHAT IS THE LOGIC BEHIND THIS "HOMOSEXUALS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BREAKDOWN OF TRADITIONAL FAMILY VALUES" SCHTICK?



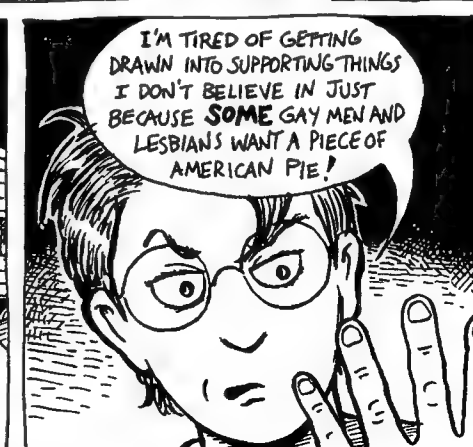
CONSERVATIVES HAVE SOME NERVE BLAMING THEIR FAILED MARRIAGES AND CRACK-SMOKING KIDS ON ME.



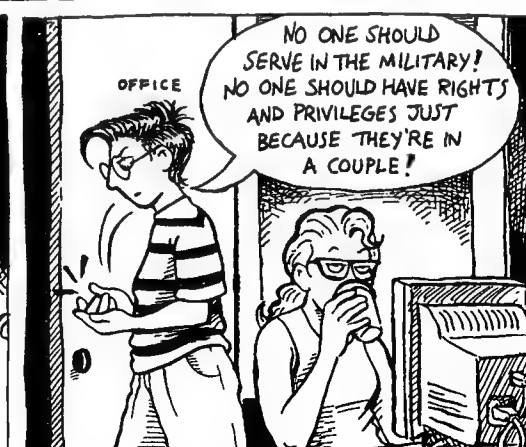
SO DIDJA E-MAIL THE WHITE HOUSE TO TELL THE PRESIDENT TO STAND UP FOR US FOR ONCE?



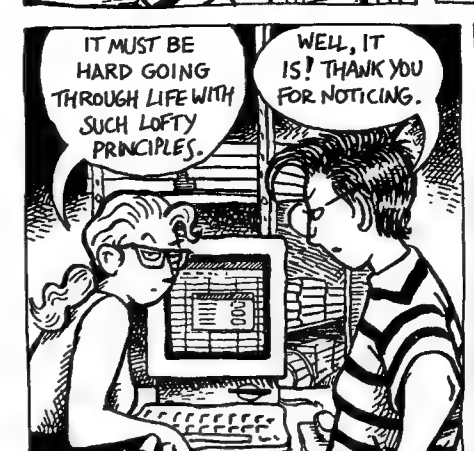
NO, I DID NOT! I HAVE BETTER THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT THAN THE "DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE" ACT. LET CLINTON SIGN IT!



I'M TIRED OF GETTING DRAWN INTO SUPPORTING THINGS I DON'T BELIEVE IN JUST BECAUSE SOME GAY MEN AND LESBIANS WANT A PIECE OF AMERICAN PIE!



NO ONE SHOULD SERVE IN THE MILITARY! NO ONE SHOULD HAVE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES JUST BECAUSE THEY'RE IN A COUPLE!



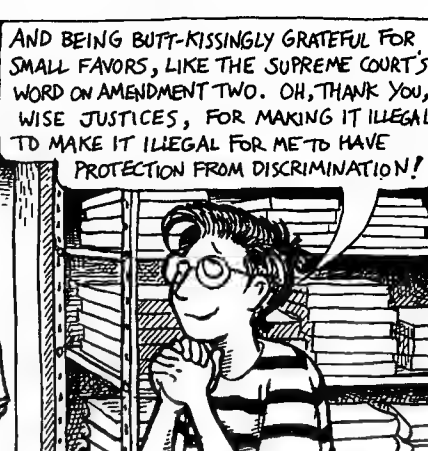
IT MUST BE HARD GOING THROUGH LIFE WITH SUCH LOFTY PRINCIPLES.

WELL, IT IS! THANK YOU FOR NOTICING.



MO, THE REAL WORLD IS MESSY! YOU HAVE TO MAKE COMPROMISES ON THE WAY TO YOUR LONG-TERM GOALS!

YEAH, LIKE VOTING FOR CLINTON EVEN THOUGH HE THINKS WE SHOULDN'T ASK, TELL, OR SAY "I DO."



AND BEING BUTT-KISSINGLY GRATEFUL FOR SMALL FAVORS, LIKE THE SUPREME COURT'S WORD ON AMENDMENT TWO. OH, THANK YOU, WISE JUSTICES, FOR MAKING IT ILLEGAL TO MAKE IT ILLEGAL FOR ME TO HAVE PROTECTION FROM DISCRIMINATION!

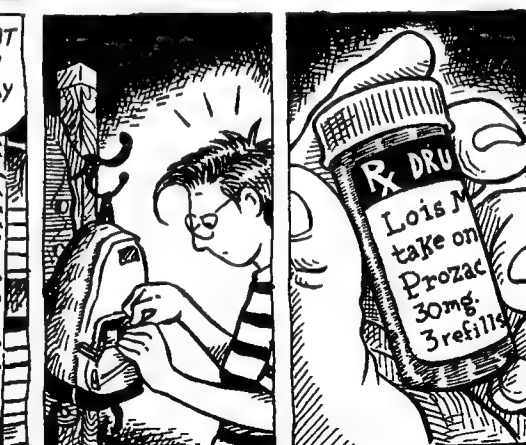


THAT'S RIGHT! SCOFF AT A REVOLUTIONARY VICTORY FOR GAY AND LESBIAN RIGHTS. YOU MAY BE PRINCEPIED, MO, BUT YOU'RE A PUTZ.



HUH. I'LL HAVE TO LOOK THAT UP AFTER LUNCH. WANT ANYTHING AT THE DELI?

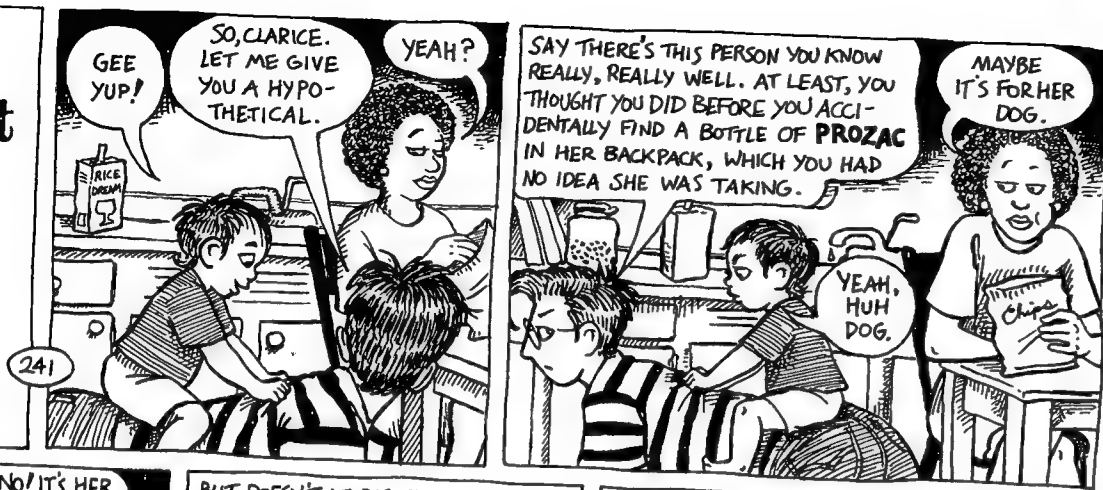
YEAH. HOW 'BOUT A PICKLE? MY WALLET'S IN MY BACKPACK.



Lois take on Prozac 30mg 3 refills

judgment day

© 1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL



241



the pill

© 1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL



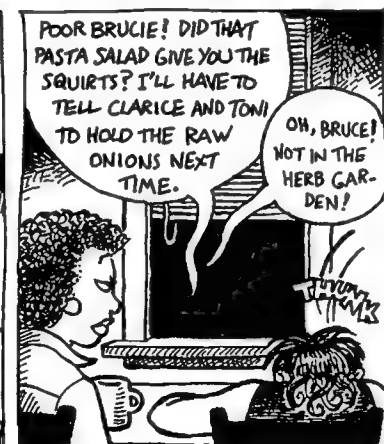
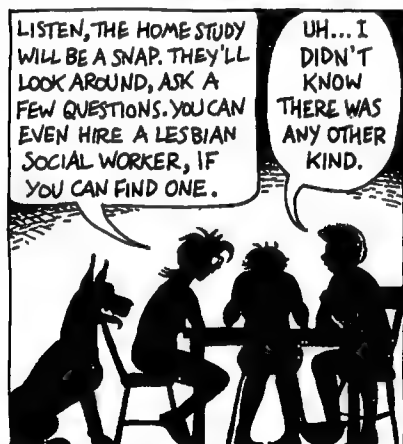
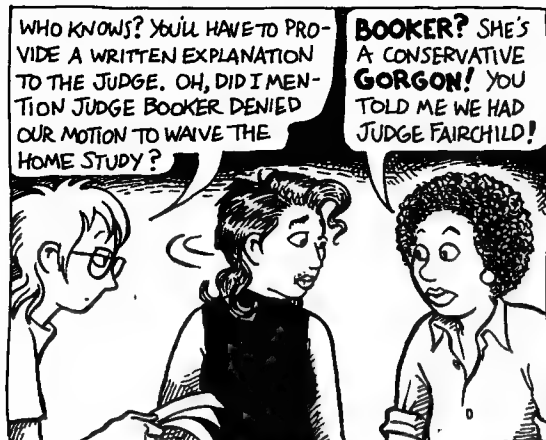
242



non compos mentis

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

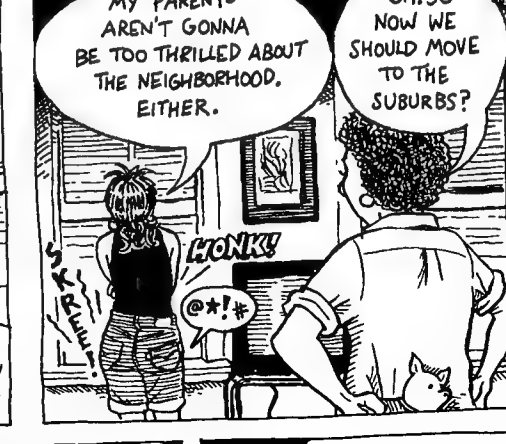
243



this is not my beautiful wife

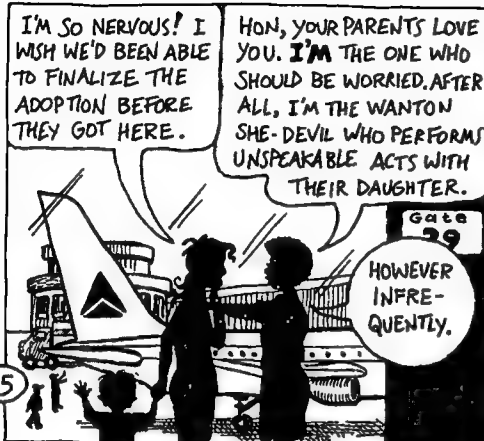
©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

244



in LOCO parentis

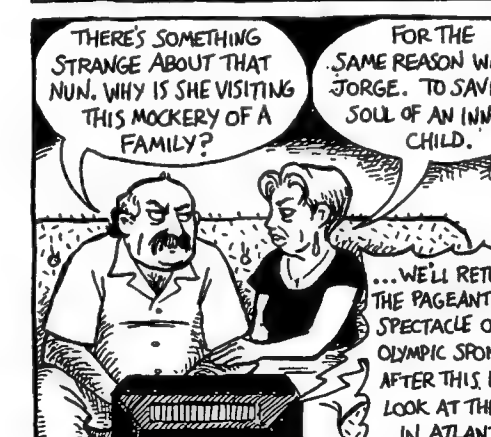
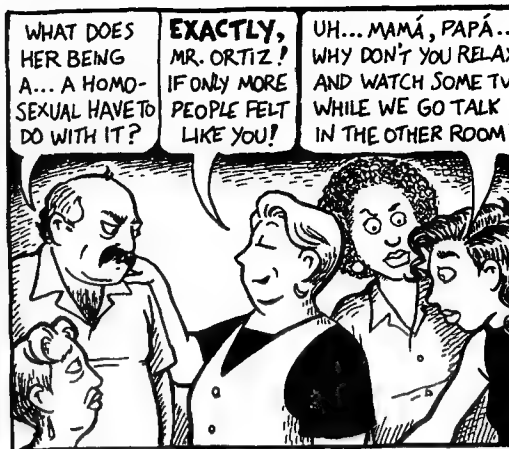
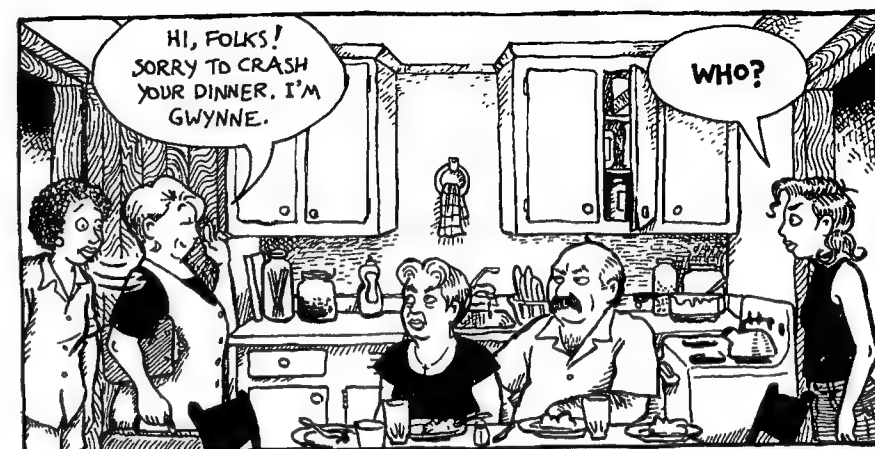
©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL



the Converts

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

CLARICE AND TONI'S ADOPTION CASEWORKER HAS SHOWN UP AT A RATHER INOCCUPORTUNE JUNCTURE.



The Line

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

247

STRANGED FROM HER TWO CLOSEST FRIENDS, MO FINDS HER SOCIAL LIFE SADLY CIRCUMSCRIBED.

AMAZING! THAT RESOLUTE GAZE, THAT FIRMLY SET JAW! YOU LOOK LESS INEFFECTUAL ALREADY!

HELLO, SYDNEY.

DO YOU KNOW WHY PEOPLE READ SELF-IMPROVEMENT BOOKS?

OH, RAPTURE! YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME.

BECAUSE THEY CAN'T ACCEPT THAT REAL CHANGE IS FUTILE! HOPELESS! NON POSSUMUS! READ ALL THE BOOKS YOU WANT, YOU'LL STILL BE THE SAME WEAK-WILLED WRETCH TILL THE DAY YOU DIE!

HEY!

WHAT A SCAM. I SHOULD WRITE ONE OF THESE THINGS.

YEAH. "HOW TO LOSE FRIENDS AND ANTAGONIZE PEOPLE."

FROM WHAT MY SOURCES TELL ME, THAT'S YOUR BEAT.

WHAT DO YOUR "SOURCES" TELL YOU?

OH, JUST THAT NEITHER LOIS NOR YOUR FRIEND CLARICE IS SPEAKING TO YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE SUCH A RIGID, SELF-RIGHTEOUS PRIG.

IS THAT RIGHT? WELL IF I HAD A SUPERIORITY COMPLEX THE SIZE OF YOURS, I WOULDN'T THROW STONES.

SOUNDS LIKE MY SOURCES WERE RIGHT.

SYDNEY, IF YOU DON'T LIKE MY PERSONALITY, FEEL FREE TO GO PESTER SOMEONE ELSE.

BUT THAT'S JUST IT! I DO LIKE YOUR PERSONALITY, MO! I ADMIRE YOU FOR PUTTING PRINCIPLES BEFORE PEOPLE-PLEASING.

WELL! AS LONG AS YOU ADMIRE ME, WHAT DO I NEED WITH FRIENDS?

SEE? YOU'RE CRUSTY. THAT'S GOOD. BUT I BET PEOPLE MISUNDERSTAND YOU A LOT.

WELL...

YOU DON'T NEED TO BECOME A BETTER PERSON, MO. YOU'RE PERFECT JUST THE WAY YOU ARE!

THANKS, SYDNEY, BUT YOU MAKE A REALLY GHOULISH MISTER ROGERS.

HUH. HAS SHE ALWAYS HAD SUCH LONG FINGERS?

false moderation

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

248

THE FATEFUL VISIT DRAWS TO A CLOSE.

FINAL BOARDING FOR FLIGHT 1453...

WELL, THANKS AGAIN FOR THE CAR YOU BOUGHT RAFFI. AND, UH... FOR NOT PRESSURING ME ABOUT MOVING BACK TO SAN JUAN WITH HIM AFTER I SAID NO.

WE CAN'T FORCE YOU. IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND, YOU'RE ALWAYS WELCOME.

I'M NOT GONNA CHANGE MY MIND, MAMA. I TOLD YOU. CLARICE AND I ARE RAFFI'S FAMILY.

LISTEN, DON'T FORGET TO HAVE YOUR FLUIDS CHECKED. THE OIL LIGHT SHOULDN'T BE FLICKERING LIKE THAT.

SÍ, SÍ. OKAY.

ADIOS!

THAT EVENING...

GOD, I'M SO GLAD THEY'RE GONE. PEACE AT LAST!

OW! RAFFI, THOSE WERE MY TOES YOU JUST RAN OVER!

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

FANK YOU?

NO. WHEN YOU HURT SOMEONE, YOU SAY 'I'M SORRY.'

YOU SAY 'THANK YOU' WHEN YOUR GRANDPARENTS BUY YOU AN OBSCENELY EXTRAVAGANT TOY AFTER I EXPRESSLY ASKED THEM NOT TO.

DON'T YOU THINK THEY WERE ACTING KINDA STRANGE?

YOUR MOM AND DAD? I TRUST THAT'S A RHETORICAL QUESTION.

NO, I MEAN WASN'T IT WEIRD HOW AFTER THAT INITIAL OUTBURST ABOUT RAISING RAFFI IN A 'REAL' FAMILY, THEY NEVER BROUGHT IT UP AGAIN? YOU KNOW THEY DIDN'T CHANGE THEIR MINDS!

THEY FIGURE IF THEY ACT ALL NICE, THEY'LL HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF FINALLY WINNING YOU OVER.

IT'S JUST SO CREEPY. I'D RATHER BE SPEWED AT. AT LEAST I'D KNOW WHERE I STOOD.

YEAH, WELL. YOU CATCH MORE FLIES WITH HONEY.

KINDLER, GENTLER G.O.P. OR MERELY A CLEVER RUSE?

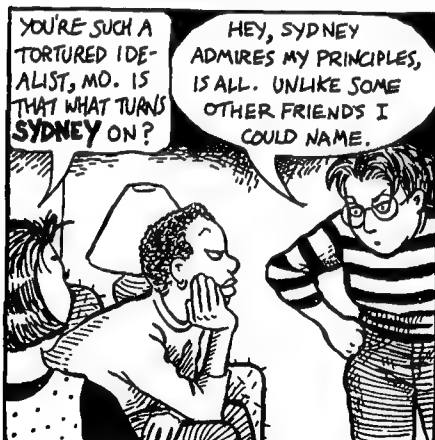
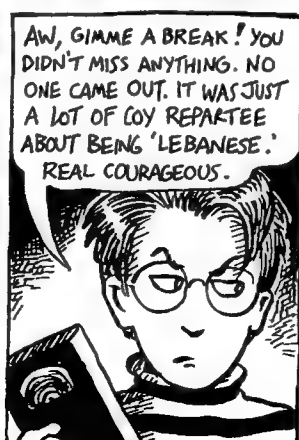
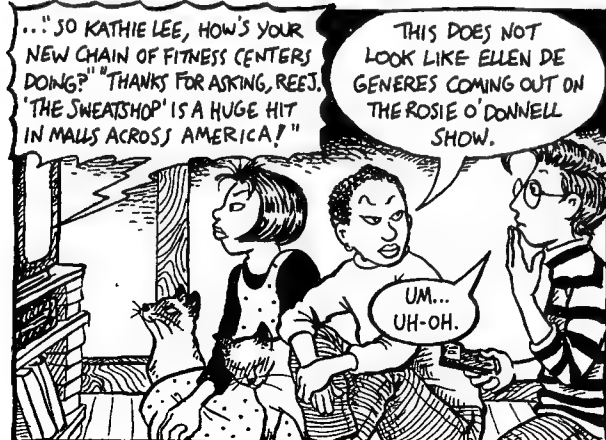
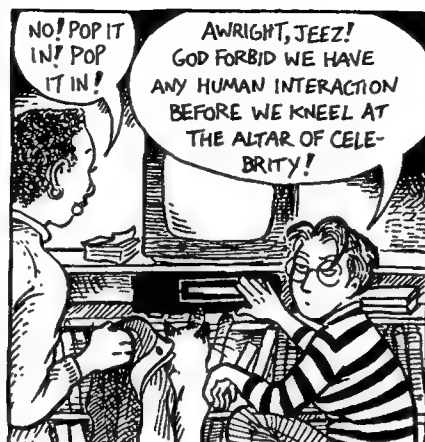
MEANWHILE...

HI, MO. I REALLY ENJOYED YOUR REVIEW OF CANDACE GINGRICH'S MEMOIR IN THE PAPER THIS WEEK. "A PROFOUND AND DEEPLY RESONANT BILDUNGSRoman." ABSOLUTELY. SAY, NICE SHIRT. DKNY?

Double Play

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

249



Ph.D. & Sympathy

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

250



DESPERATE MEASURES

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

251

HONEY!
I'M HOME!

HELLO, DARLING!
LET ME GET YOU A
MARTINI AND YOUR
SLIPPERS.

MY, WHAT
A HEAVY BEARD
YOU'VE GROWN SINCE
THIS MORNING,
MOMMY!

THAT'S
NOT MOMMY!
THAT'S
CARLOS!

OH, SUGAR, I
KNOW IT'S CARLOS!
I WAS JUST
BEING SILLY!

SOUNDS LIKE TIME FOR
ANOTHER DEPOSIT INTO
HIS THERAPY FUND.

WHERE'S
TONI?

OUT FOR A WALK. SHE WAS
ALL UPSET OVER SOMETHING
HER MOM SENT IN THE MAIL.

JESUS
CHRIST!

EXODUS
INTERNATIONAL
FREEDOM
FROM
HOMOSEXUALITY
IS POSSIBLE
THROUGH THE
POWER OF
JESUS
CHRIST

MEANWHILE...

OKAY. "GENDER, DEVIANC
AND THE INFOMERCIAL"
SHOULD BE IN ON THURS
DAY. ANYTHING ELSE?

DINNER,
MAYHAP?

OH, PLEASE!
I CAN'T HAVE
DINNER WITH YOU,
SYDNEY!

WHY NOT?
BECAUSE I'M A
FLESH-EATER?

NO. BECAUSE
YOU'RE ARROGANT,
CONDESCENDING, AND
COMPLETELY OB
NOXIOUS.

YET
STRANGELY
COMPELLING.

THAT WEASEL!
DOES SHE HAVE TO
DO HER FLIRTING
WHERE I WORK?

FRANKLY, I DON'T SEE THE
ATTRACTION. DOES SYDNEY
HAVE SOME KIND OF ILL
DRESSED IDEOLOGUE FETISH?

OH, COME ON! MO'S
A CATCH. WELL...
IN A REPRESSED,
BUTCH BOTTOM
KIND OF WAY. I'VE
GOTTA WARN HER
ABOUT SYDNEY!

DOES THIS MEAN
WE'RE FINALLY
GONNA FIND
OUT WHAT SHE
DID TO YOU?

IF THAT'S
WHAT IT
TAKES.

TILL
FRIDAY,
THEN.

CIAO,
BELLA.

The Trouble With Sydney

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

252

WE WERE LOVERS OUR LAST
SEMESTER AT SANTA CRUZ. THEN
WHEN SYDNEY WENT TO GRAD
SCHOOL, I FOLLOWED HER EAST.
GOD, WE LIVED IN THE NASTIEST
LITTLE APARTMENT...

HI, BABE. I HAFSTA EAT
AND RUN. GOT AN IMPOR
TANT LECTURE TONIGHT.
HOW WAS THE COPY SHOP?

I DIDN'T
GO TO WORK. I
HAD THAT APPOINT
MENT AT THE CLIN
IC, REMEM
BER?

OH, RIGHT.
DID THEY FIGURE
OUT WHAT'S WRONG
WITH YOU?

YEAH.
I HAVE
MULTIPLE
SCLEROSIS.

RIGHT.
AND I HAVE
BUBONIC
PLAGUE.

NO, I'M SERIOUS. THIS
IS FOR REAL. I'VE BEEN
SUSPICIOUS FOR A WHILE,
BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO
TELL YOU TILL I KNEW
FOR SURE.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS!
ISN'T THAT SOME KIND
OF DEGENERATIVE
THING? LIKE WHERE
YOU END UP PARALYZED
IN A WHEELCHAIR?

WELL, NO... NOT
NECESSARILY.
THEY GAVE ME
A BUNCH OF
INFORMATION...

GREAT. I'LL LOOK AT IT LATER.
I GOTTA GO NOW OR I'LL BE LATE
FOR "CIXOUS'S MEDUSA: (G)ORGON
IZATION / CASTRATION OF THE
PHALLIC ECONOMY."

SHE
DIDN'T COME
HOME THAT
NIGHT.

WHAT AN
ASSHOLE!

YEAH. NOT EXACTLY
SUPPORTIVE. BUT...
WE'VE ALL DONE AWFUL
THINGS. SHE WAS YOUNG!
IT WAS A SHOCK!

YEAH, WELL.
WHEN SHE
FINALLY
SHOWED
UP...

LOOK, THIS JUST ISN'T
WORKING. YOU DON'T
CHALLENGE ME ENOUGH.
I'M MOVING OUT.

WH...
WHERE
WILL YOU
GO?

I'M GONNA
STAY WITH
MADELINE
FOR A
WHILE.

MADELINE??
THE VISITING
COMP LIT
PROFESSOR?

TURNS OUT THEY'D
BEEN THEORIZING
TOGETHER SINCE
MY FIRST SYMP
TOMS SHOWED UP.

SUH-LEAZE-BALL!

SHE JUST
ABANDONED YOU? SCARED
AND SICK IN A STRANGE
CITY?! I CAN'T GO OUT
WITH THIS WOMAN!

...AND IN HERE IS MY DILIGENT
STAFF. HOPELESS WORKAHOLICS,
AS YOU CAN SEE. EVERYONE,
MEET OUR NEW INTERN, ANJALI.

OH, WOW. I
AM TRIPPING
OUT THAT I
ACTUALLY GET
TO WORK HERE!

BEING CONSTANTLY SURROUNDED
BY BOOKS! BRINGING IDEAS,
POEMS, AND MANIFESTOS TO THE
WORLD! HOW CAN YOU STAND IT?!

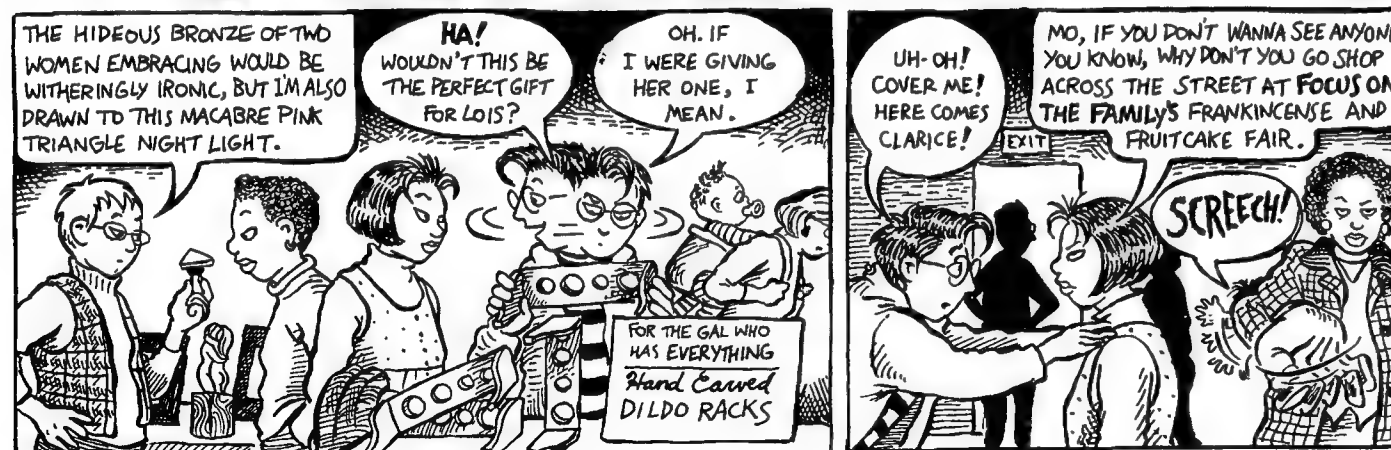
OH,
WE MAN
AGE SOME
HOW.

Seasonal Affection Disorder

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

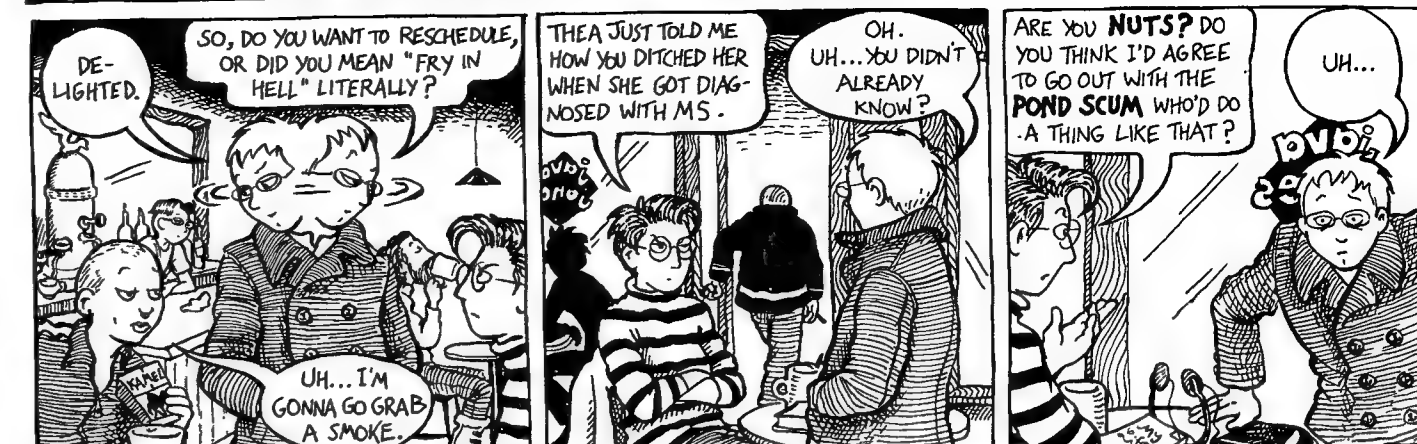
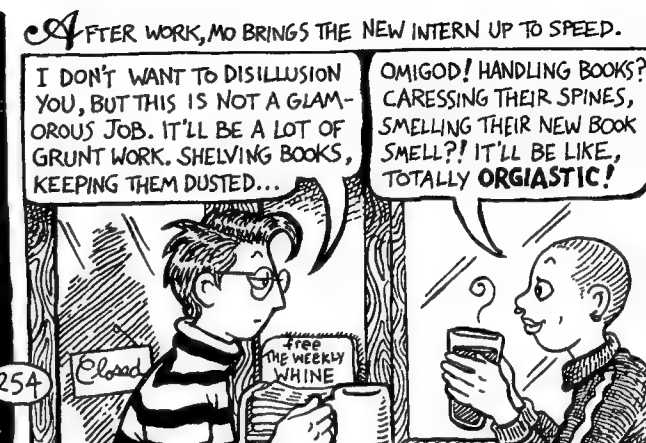
AT THE ANNUAL HOLIDAY CRAFT BAZAAR, OUR HEROINE IS EXHIBITING SOME BIZARRE AND CRAFTY BEHAVIOR.

253



the retraction

©1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL



DATE by default

© 1996 BY ALISON BECHDEL

255

FOLLOWING SOME MILD MELODRAMA AT THE COFFEE SHOP, MO HAS PACIFICALLY AGREED TO DINE WITH SYDNEY.



ARE YOU OKAY? D'YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT?

YEAH. JEEZ, I GUESS A GIRL HAS TO BREAK DOWN IN TEARS TO GET A DATE WITH YOU.



SYDNEY, IF THAT LITTLE OUTBURST WAS SOME KIND OF SCAM...

IT WASN'T! I WAS GENUINELY UPSET!



AND THIS IS **NOT** A DATE, OKAY? I JUST WANTED TO APOLOGIZE FOR HURTING YOU.



IT'S ODD. BEING CALLED POND SCUM NEVER BOTHERED ME BEFORE. BUT SOMEHOW, WHEN YOU SAID IT, IT REALLY GOT IN!



I SAID I WAS SORRY.

IN THAT INSTANT, YOU MADE ME **REALLY** UNDERSTAND WHAT A SHIT I'D BEEN TO THEA ALL THOSE YEARS AGO. YOU HAVE A CERTAIN MORAL AUTHORITY ABOUT YOU, MO. A KANTIAN CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE KIND OF THING. VERY SEXY.



PASTA PUTANESCA...

...AND VERMICELLI WITH CHARD STEMS. DO EITHER OF YOU LADIES WANT SOME FR...



NO!

SYDNEY, I'M TRYING TO HAVE A SERIOUS DISCUSSION HERE. COULD YOU QUIT TEASING ME FOR A SECOND?



TEASING YOU IS A RARE PLEASURE, BUT AT THE MOMENT I'M PERFECTLY SERIOUS.

COMPLETELY?

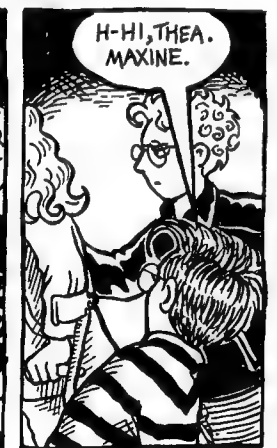
MM-HMMM.



HUH. Y'KNOW, YOU HAVE A RAKISH, DEBAUCHED SORT OF CHARM YOURSELF.



WATCH OUT. I MIGHT CORRUPT YOU.



HELLO, MO. HELLO, SYDNEY.

H-HI, THEA. MAXINE.



SHIT! I TOLD HER I WASN'T GONNA GO OUT WITH YOU.

LOOKS LIKE I'M HAVING A DELETERIOUS EFFECT ON YOUR MORALS ALREADY. SHALL WE KNOCK OVER A PASTRY SHOP FOR DESSERT?

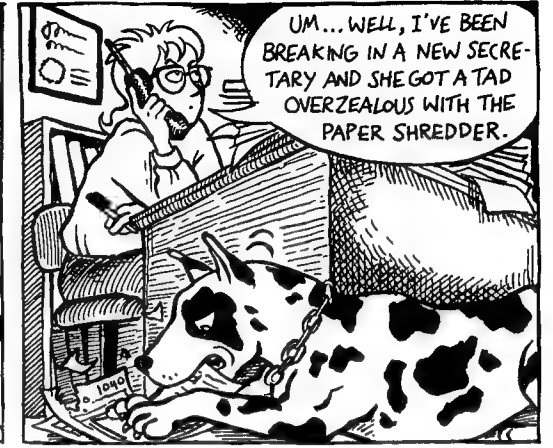
Futures Trading

© 1997 BY ALISON BECHDEL



CLARICE? UH, I WONDER IF YOU COULD GET ME A COPY OF YOUR TAX RETURNS FROM THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

ALEXIS, WE SENT YOU THAT STUFF MONTHS AGO!



UM... WELL, I'VE BEEN BREAKING IN A NEW SECRETARY AND SHE GOT A TAD OVERZEALOUS WITH THE PAPER SHREDDER.



SHORTLY... SHREDDED?

CLARICE, IF YOUR "FRIEND" SCREWS UP THIS ADOPTION, YOU'RE GONNA BE SLEEPING ON THE COUCH. AT HER PLACE. WITH HER PET GIRAFFE!



BABE, I HAVE ANOTHER CALL. CAN YOU JUST GET THE COPIES IN THE MAIL?

AN' DEN... AN' DEN... AN' DEN DE MOUSE WANTS SOME MIWK.



PERRY MASON SCREW UP AGAIN?

NATURALLY, D'YOU THINK YOU COULD STAY HERE WITH HIM WHILE I RUN OUT TO THE COPY SHOP?



LIKE I HAVE NOTHING BETTER TO DO! NO MATTER HOW BUSY I AM WITH RAFFI AND THE HOUSE AND MY BOOKKEEPING GIGS, I'M THE ONE WHO HAS TO DROP EVERYTHING BECAUSE CLARICE'S JOB IS MORE IMPORTANT.

AN' HE DWINKS IT WIF A STWAW.

MM-HMMM.

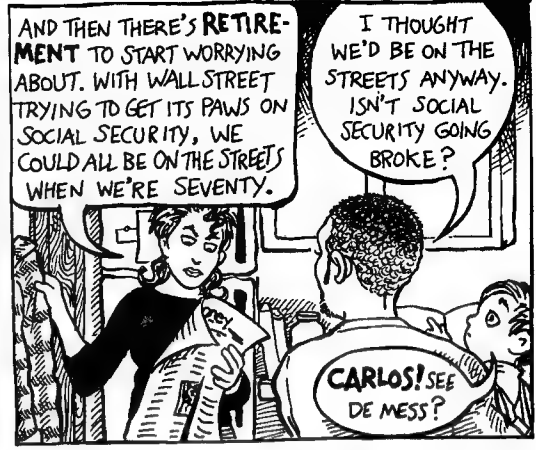


IT'S THE SAME WITH DANIEL. JUST BECAUSE I'M BETWEEN JOBS, HE THINKS I HAVE TIME TO STAND AROUND IRONING HIS DRAWERS. OH, I BROUGHT YOU THE TAPE OF YESTERDAY'S "ALL MY CHILDREN."

...AN' DEN HE CUTS HIS HAIR AND MAKES SUCH A MESS.



I'VE GOTTA GO BACK TO WORK FULL-TIME. GOD KNOWS WE NEED THE MONEY. I DON'T WANT RAFFI SPENDING HIS WHOLE CHILDHOOD IN THIS DUMP.



AND THEN THERE'S RETIREMENT TO START WORRYING ABOUT. WITH WALL STREET TRYING TO GET ITS PAWS ON SOCIAL SECURITY, WE COULD ALL BE ON THE STREETS WHEN WE'RE SEVENTY.

I THOUGHT WE'D BE ON THE STREETS ANYWAY. ISN'T SOCIAL SECURITY GOING BROKE?

CARLOS! SEE DE MESS?



YEAH, BUT THERE ARE OTHER SOLUTIONS BESIDES HANDING BROKERAGE FIRMS MILLIONS OF NEW ACCOUNTS TO COLLECT FEES ON. AND WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE STOCK MARKET FALLS?

IF YOU GIVE A POORIE A BAGGY.

HUH. LOOKS LIKE YOUR ROOM.



MAYBE RAFFI WILL GROW UP TO BE A RUTHLESS INVESTMENT BANKER, AND WITH THE MONEY HE BILKS OUT OF WIDOWS AND ORPHANS HE'LL BUY A NICE LITTLE CARIBBEAN ISLAND FOR HIS NEAREST AND DEAREST TO RETIRE ON.

IF HE'S THAT RUTHLESS, WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HE'LL SPARE US?



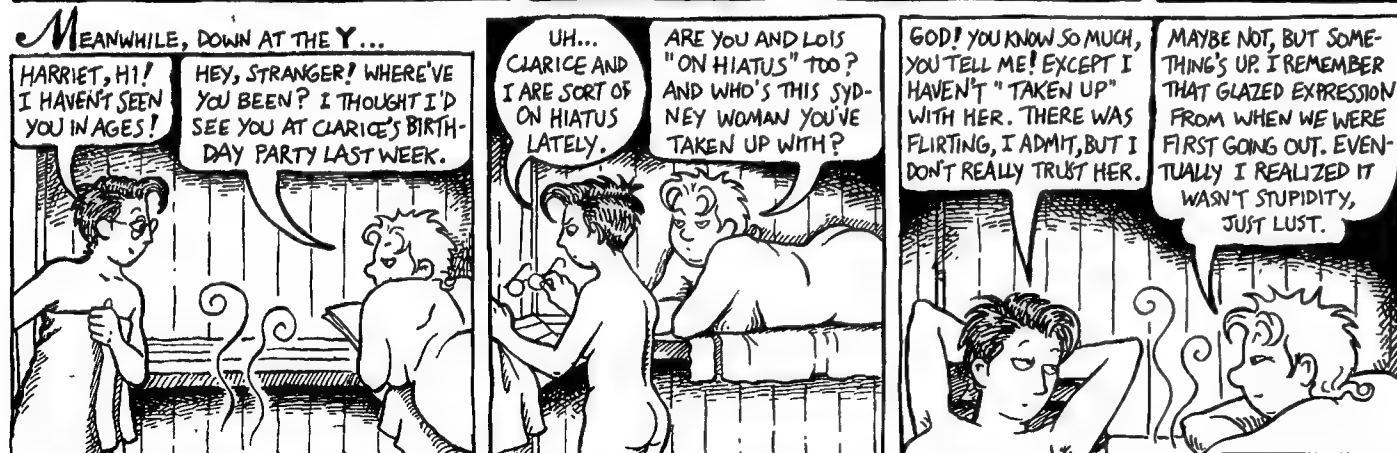
WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT YOU? I'M THE ONE WHO READ TO HIM. YOU WERE ALWAYS FLITTING OFF TO KINKO'S.

BYE-BYE, MOMMY.

the EX factor

©1997 BY ALISON BECHDEL

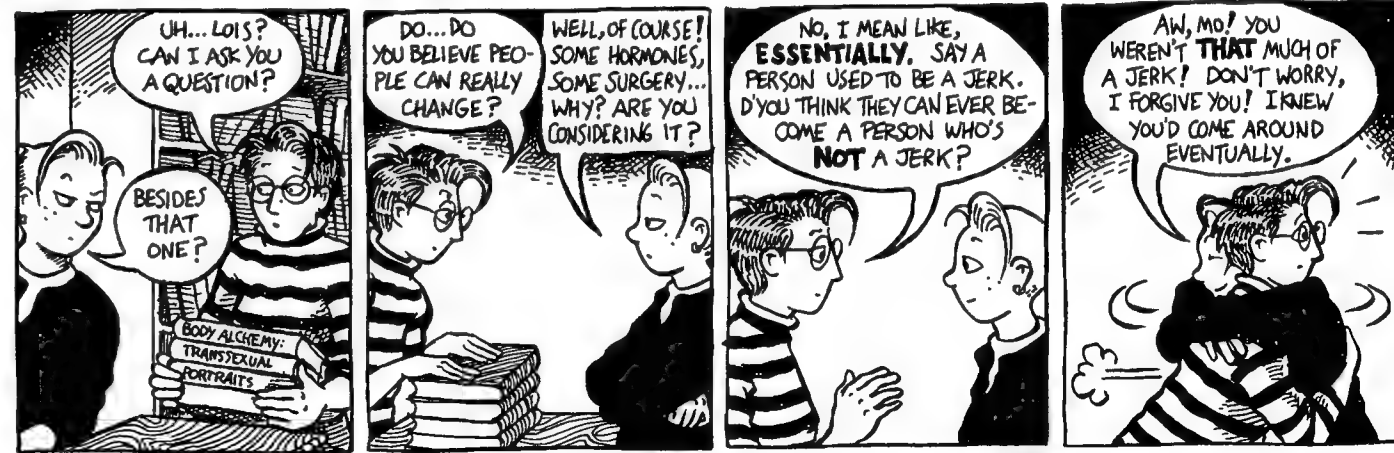
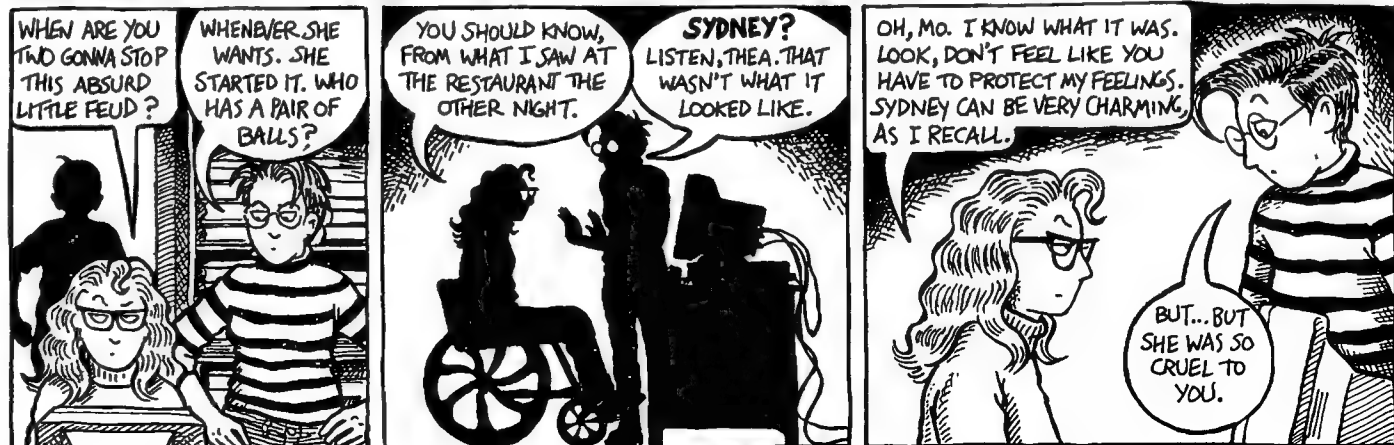
257



metamorphosis

©1997 BY ALISON BECHDEL

258



Under-whelmed

© 1997 BY ALISON BECHDEL

259

HI, LOIS.

HEY! I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE BOTH HOME. I THOUGHT I'D MAKE US A BIG HEAP OF FRENCH TOAST FOR SUPPER. WE NEVER EAT TOGETHER ANY MORE.

THANKS, BUT I'M JUST GONNA FINISH THESE LEFTOVERS AND GET TO WORK.

AND I JUST PHONED FOR THAI FOOD. Y'KNOW, YOU SHOULD EAT MORE VEGETABLES IF YOU'RE DEPRESSED. IT MIGHT HELP.

I DON'T FEEL LIKE VEGETABLES. I FEEL LIKE FRENCH TOAST.

HOW ARE YOU FEELING? IS THE PROZAC MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

I'M FINE. HOW'S YOUR DISSERTATION COMING? MAKING ANY PROGRESS?

I WAS JUST TRYING TO BE SUPPORTIVE.

WHAT'S HER PROBLEM?

HER PETITION FOR AN EXTENSION GOT DENIED TODAY. IF SHE DOESN'T FINISH IN A MONTH, SHE'LL BE PURSUING A DOCTOR OF FRYOLATOR DEGREE DOWN AT ROY ROGERS.

SLAM!

LATER...

NEXT ON ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT, HOT HOLLYWOOD HUNKS HOPPED UP ON HEROIN, AND MICHAEL JACKSON'S UROLOGIST TELLS ALL!

UH... LOIS? D'YOU REALLY HAVE TO WATCH THAT RIGHT NOW? I'M TRYING TO WRITE A GRANT PROPOSAL HERE.

OH, EXCUSE ME. GOD FORBID MY LOWBROW AMUSEMENT'S SHOULD DISRUPT YOUR VERY IMPORTANT WORK FOR THE BETTERMENT OF ALL HUMANKIND.

LOIS!

CONSIDERING I'M NOT GETTING A DEGREE OR SAVING THE WORLD, I'M JUST GRATEFUL YOU GUYS LET ME PAY RENT HERE.

WHY DON'T YOU GO DO SOMETHING? CALL BABETTE!

SHE'S WORKING TONIGHT. ANYHOW, I THINK SHE'S GETTING TIRED OF ME.

WELL, MO, THEN. YOU'RE FRIENDS AGAIN, RIGHT? GO OVER TO HER PLACE.

AHH, SHE HAD TO GO SHOPPING FOR SOMETHING. BESIDES, ALL SHE CAN TALK ABOUT IS SYDNEY AND THE BIG FREAKING DATE THEY'RE HAVING THIS WEEKEND.

I'LL JUST SIT HERE AND WATCH JEOPARDY WITH THE SOUND OFF.

MEANWHILE, DOWNTOWN...

CAN I HELP YOU, DOLL?

UH... I CAN'T SEEM TO FIND ANYTHING OVER SIZE FIVE THAT'S NOT BEIGE. D'YOU HAVE THE STRING BIKINI IN SIX, IN, UM... BLACK?

overbooked

© 1997 BY ALISON BECHDEL

260

SO MO, ARE YOU GONNA GIVE IT UP FOR SYDNEY TOMORROW NIGHT?

NOW THAT WE'RE FRIENDS AGAIN, LOIS, I CAN ANSWER THAT HONESTLY. GET STUFFED.

BUT JEZANNA, A MADWIMMIN WEB SITE WOULD BE THE BOMB!

THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M AFRAID OF. LISTEN, I HAVE ZERO MONEY TO DO ANYTHING EXTRA RIGHT NOW.

YOU COULD PUT IT UP FOR TWENTY BUCKS A MONTH! I CAN GET YOU A DEAL AT MY FRIEND'S ISP!

HEY, JEZ. D'YOU MIND IF I LEAVE A LITTLE EARLY? I HAFTA GET THESE VIDEOS BACK BY SIX.

GO AHEAD! RETURN YOUR VIDEOS! LAUNCH A WEB SITE! AND I WONDER WHY I'M NOT SELLING ANY @##*! BOOKS.

A TIP O' THE NIB TO MY FAVORITE GEEK, CARYL SHAW

UH... SEE YOU TOMORROW, THEN.

I ALREADY DID A MOCK-UP! LEMME SHOW YOU!

SOON...

UM... HI, CLARICE.

MO!

JEEZ, IT'S BEEN A WHILE. UH... HOW'S THE ADOPTION COMING?

OKAY. OUR HEARING IS ON MONDAY.

HOW'S RAFFI? GOD, I MISS HIM.

NO ONE'S FORCING YOU TO STAY AWAY, YOU KNOW.

LOOK, I'M SORRY. I KNOW I'VE BEEN A PITA LATELY.

A LITTLE.

BUT NOBODY'S PERFECT, RIGHT? AND JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE A TOTAL YUPPIE ASSIMILATIONIST DOESN'T MEAN I DON'T STILL, YOU KNOW, LOVE YOU.

...SO IF YOU EVER NEED A SITTING OR ANYTHING, CALL ME, OKAY?

REALLY?

AS A MATTER OF FACT, WE HAVE TO GO TO THIS BIG AWARDS DINNER TOMORROW NIGHT, AND CARLOS JUST CANCELLED ON US.

SAY NO MORE! I'LL BE THERE!

THANKS SO MUCH, MO! SEE YOU TOMORROW AT SIX.

SO I'LL COME BY AROUND SIX!

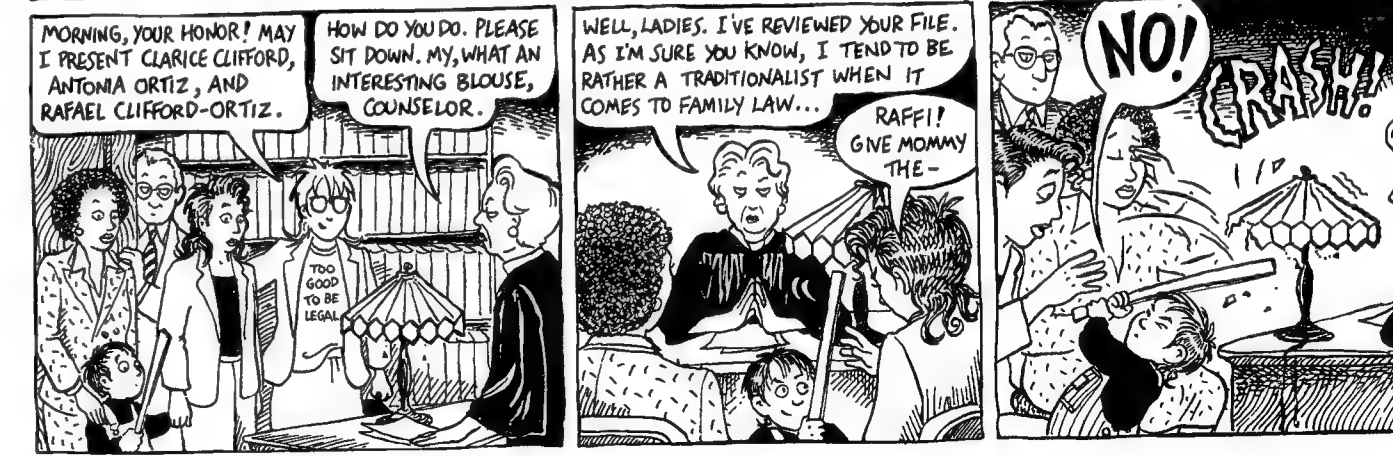
Pierce the Veil

©1997 BY ALISON BECHDEL



Made to be Broken

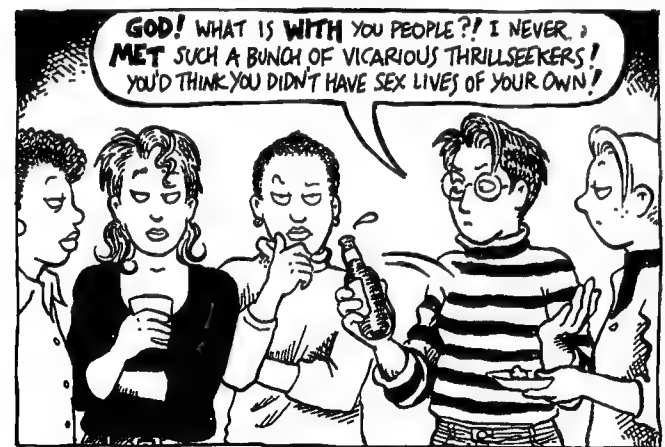
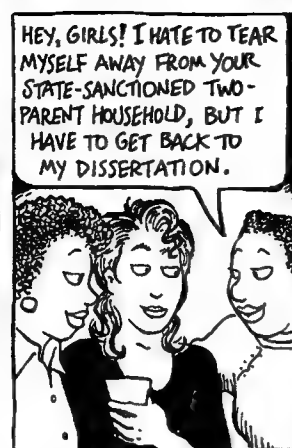
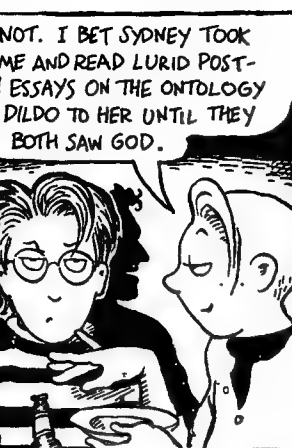
©1997 BY ALISON BECHDEL



Moment of Truth

©1997 BY ALISON BECHDEL

JUDGE BOOKER IS SURPRISINGLY CALM FOLLOWING RAFFI'S DEMOLITION OF HER TIFFANY LAMP.



monday

JEZANNA HAS CALLED AN EMERGENCY STAFF MEETING BEFORE THE STORE OPENS.



ALL I'M SAYING IS, A FEW GO-GO DANCERS WOULD LIVEN UP THIS PATHETIC SILENT AUCTION IDEA.

LET ME SPEAK PLAINLY, LOIS. WE ARE IN DEEP SHIT.



OUR LAST INCOME STATEMENT WAS SO PATHETIC, THE BANK WON'T ROLL OVER OUR BALLOON PAYMENT. WE HAVE ONE WEEK TO COME UP WITH TEN GRAND OR MADWIMMIN'S JUST A QUANT BIT OF HERSTORY. SO FORGET GO-GO DANCERS AND START THINKING SERIOUS FUNDRAISING.

BUT JEZ...



LOOK, I'D LIKE TO MAINTAIN AT LEAST A SHRED OF DIGNITY WHILE WE'RE BEGGING PEOPLE FOR MONEY. THESE RIDICULOUS ADULT NOVELTIES ALL OVER THE PLACE ARE BAD ENOUGH.

BUT PROFITABLE. YOU GOTTA ADMIT, IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE SEX TOYS AND VIDEOS, WE'D'VE GOTTEN IN THIS HOLE A LOT SOONER.



THAT'S IT! WHAT COULD BE A BETTER FUNDRAISER THAN AN EVENING OF EROTIC ENTERTAINMENT? DILDO DEMOS, HOT FICTION AND VIDEOS... WE'LL CLEAN UP!!



INTERESTING. WE COULD SERVE SENSUAL SNACKS. MANGOES, LADYFINGERS, STUFFED DATES...

CANDLE-STICK SALAD!



MO CAN ORGANIZE A READING. THEA CAN PUT OUT A MAILING... WE'LL NEED TO GET AN AD IN THE TRIBUNE...

I CAN PUT UP FLIERS ALL OVER!

OH, PERFECT. IF THE BANK DOESN'T CLOSE US DOWN, THE VICE SQUAD WILL. YOU'RE SIXTEEN, ANJALI! WHAT WOULD YOUR PARENTS SAY?!



THEY WON'T SAY ANYTHING. AND IF THEY DO, I'LL THREATEN TO 'DISCOVER' THEIR LEATHER UNDIES NEXT TIME GRANDMA'S OVER.

HAVE YOU ALL LOST YOUR MINDS?

JEZANNA, WE HAVE TO GRAB PEOPLE'S ATTENTION! THIS IS PERFECT!



COME ON DOWN TO MADWIMMIN-A-GO-GO FOR A STEAMY SATURNALIA OF CLIT LIT, CHICK FICKS, AND DIPSTICKS!

"I'LL OPEN A BOOKSTORE," I THOUGHT. "THE LIFE OF THE MIND," I THOUGHT.

tuesday



KNOCK KNOCK



GINGER?

BAM! BAM!



GINGER!

HUH?



ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? YOU DIDN'T EAT ANY DINNER, AND DIGGER WANTS HER WALK.

JUST LET HER OUT IN THE YARD. I'M IN A GROOVE HERE.



HOW LONG DO YOU PLAN ON KEEPING THIS UP? YOU HAVEN'T EATEN OR SLEPT IN TWO DAYS! AND WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU HAD A SHOWER?

I CAN'T WASTE TIME ON NONESSENTIALS! THIS THING IS DUE IN LESS THAN A WEEK, OR I GET MY SORRY ASS BOOTED OUT OF GRAD SCHOOL!



NOW LEAVE ME ALONE! I'M CONCENTRATING!

OKAY! GOD!

GRRRR



SHORTLY...

HI!

LOIS! HEY, WOULD YOU MIND WALKING THE DOG? GINGER IS POSSESSED AND I'M LATE FOR YOGA.



SURE! WANNA GO FOR WALKIES, DIGGER? HUH, GIRL?

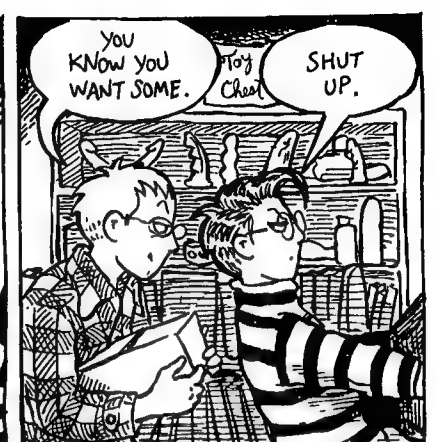
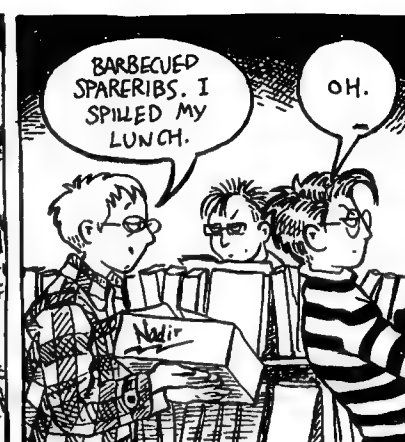
YOU SEEM REMARKABLY CHIPPER FOR SOMEONE POSSIBLY ABOUT TO LOSE HER JOB.



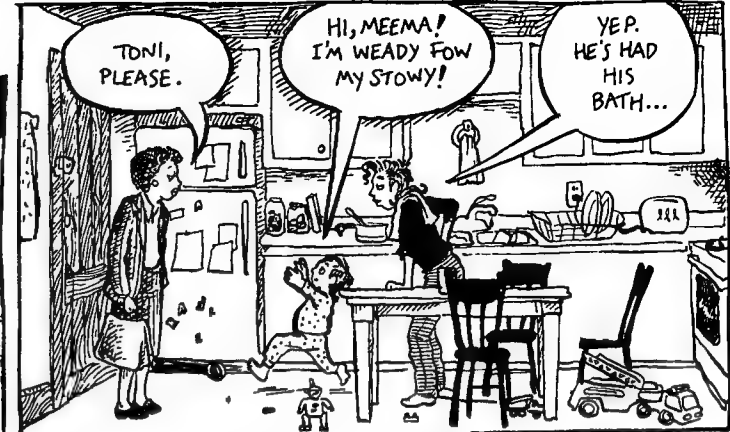
I FEEL CHIPPER. PUTTING THIS FUNDRAISER TOGETHER IS REALLY EXCITING!

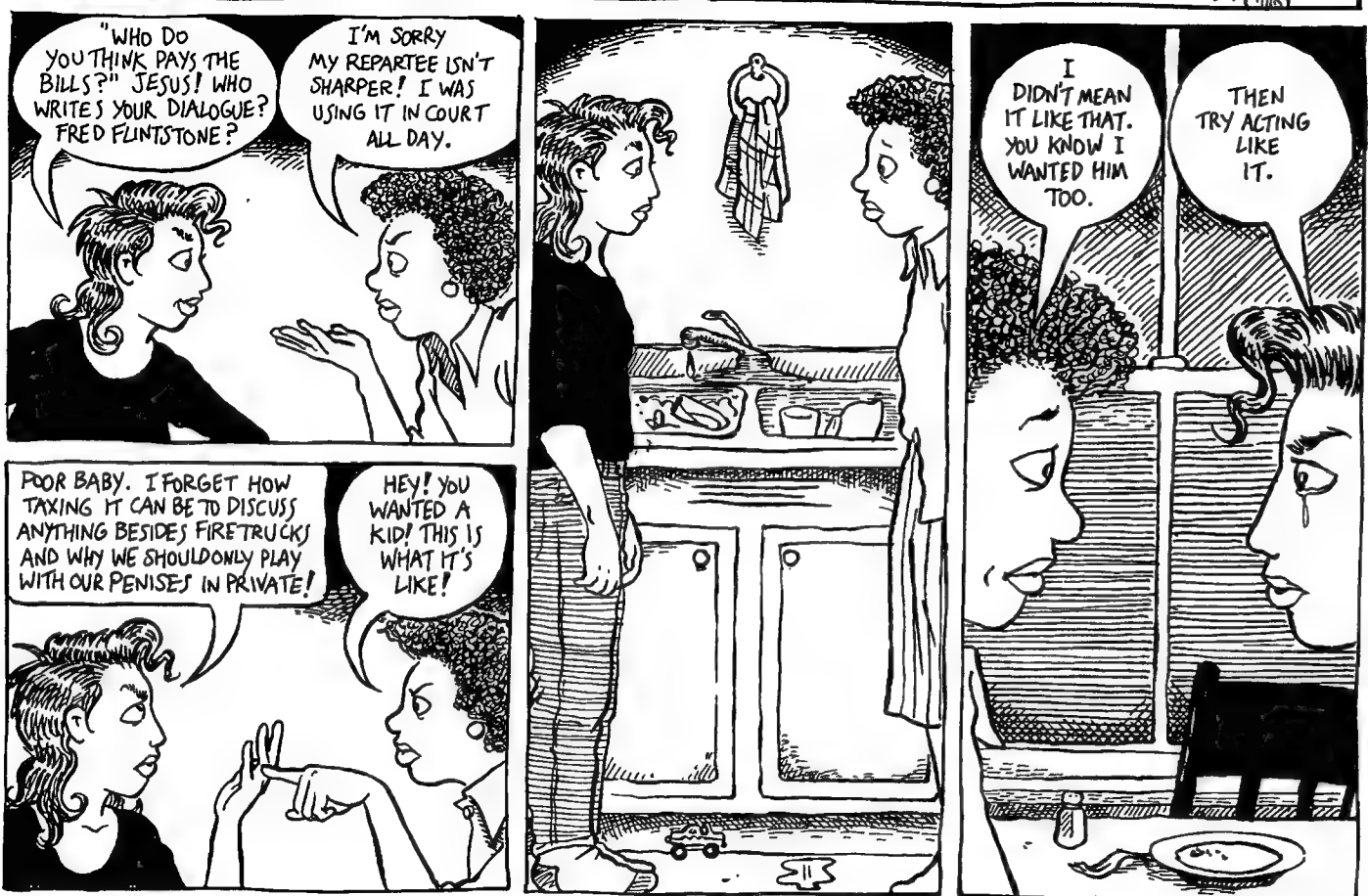
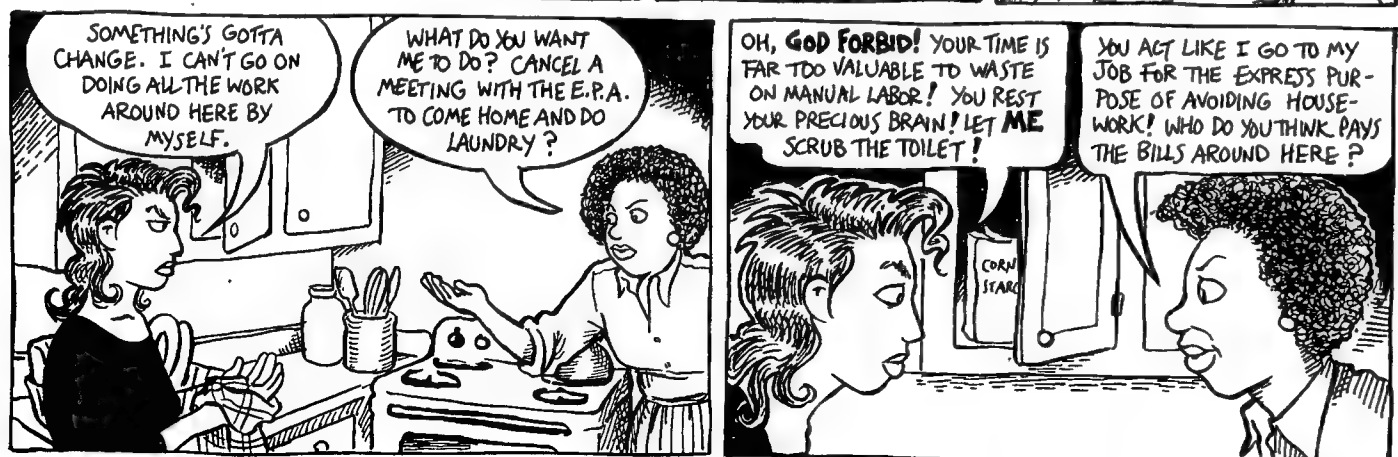
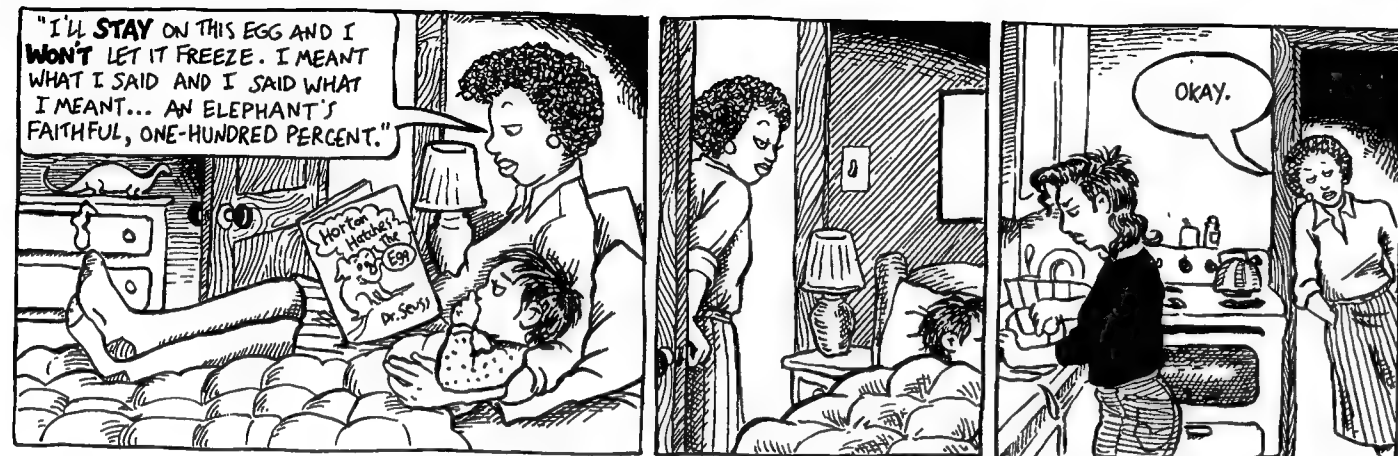


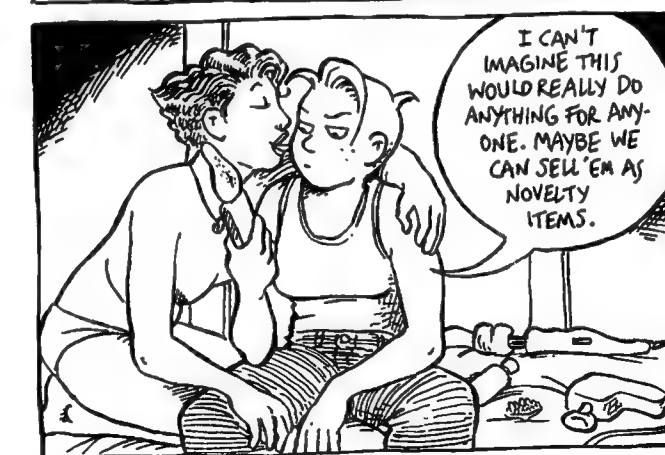
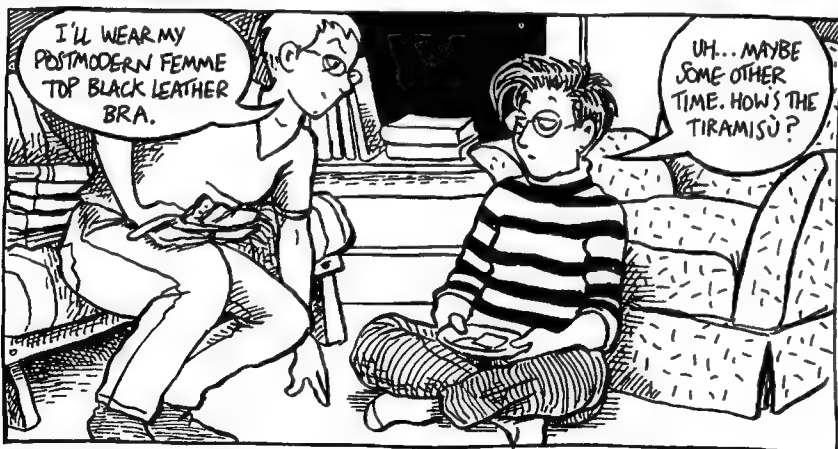
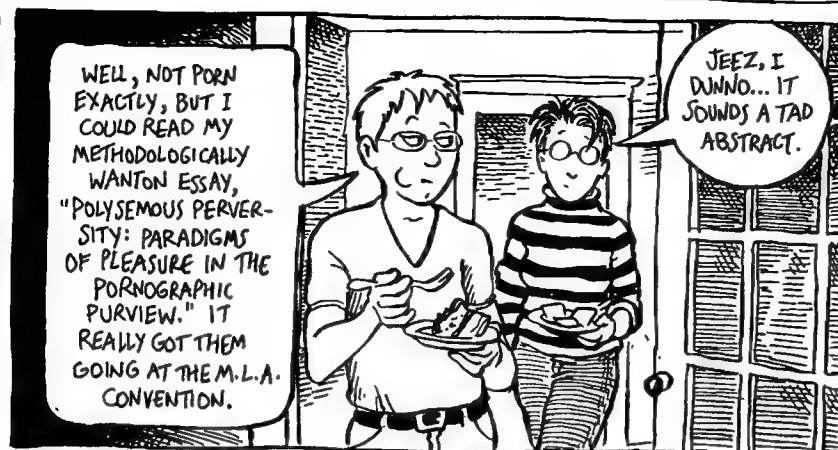
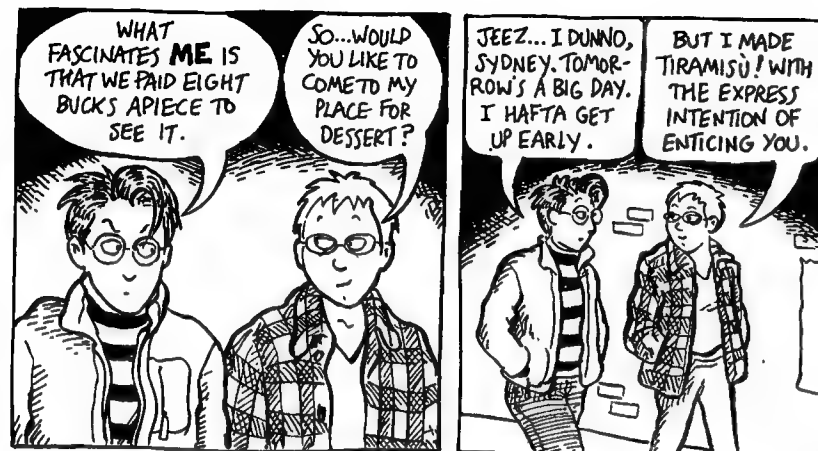
wednesday

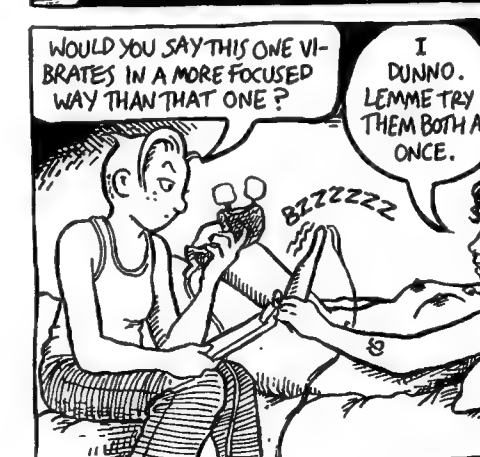
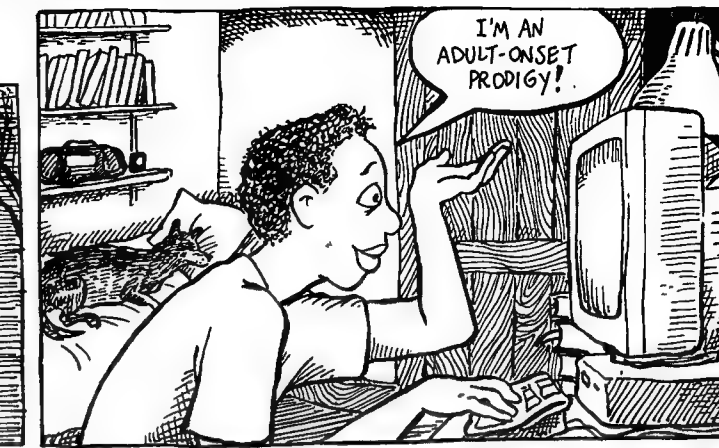


thursday



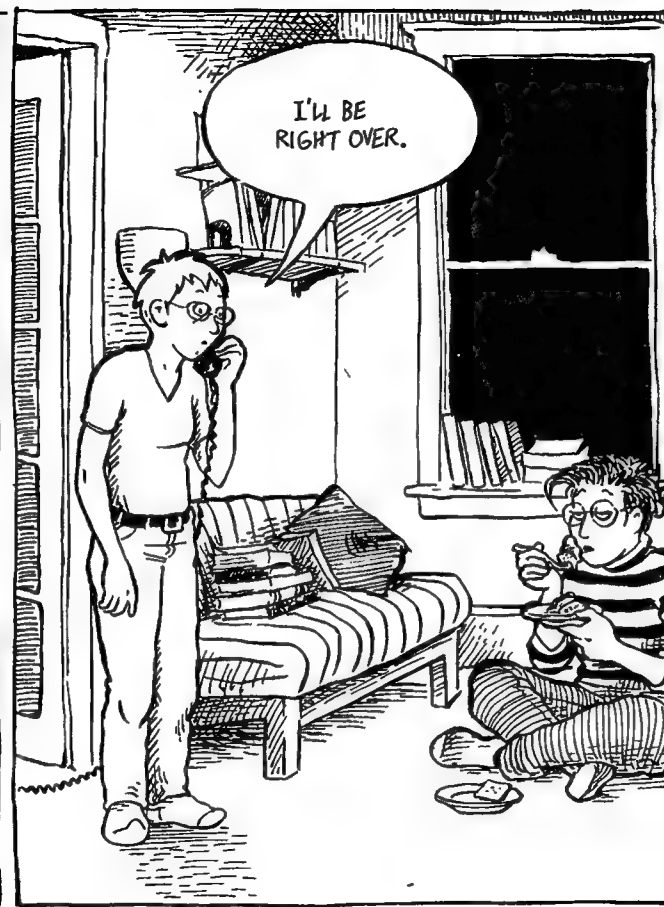




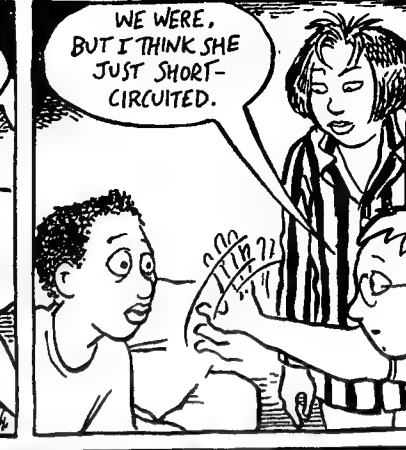
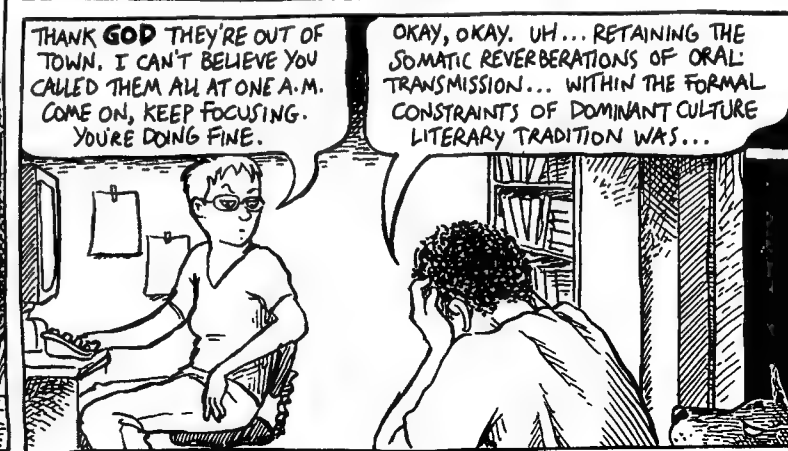
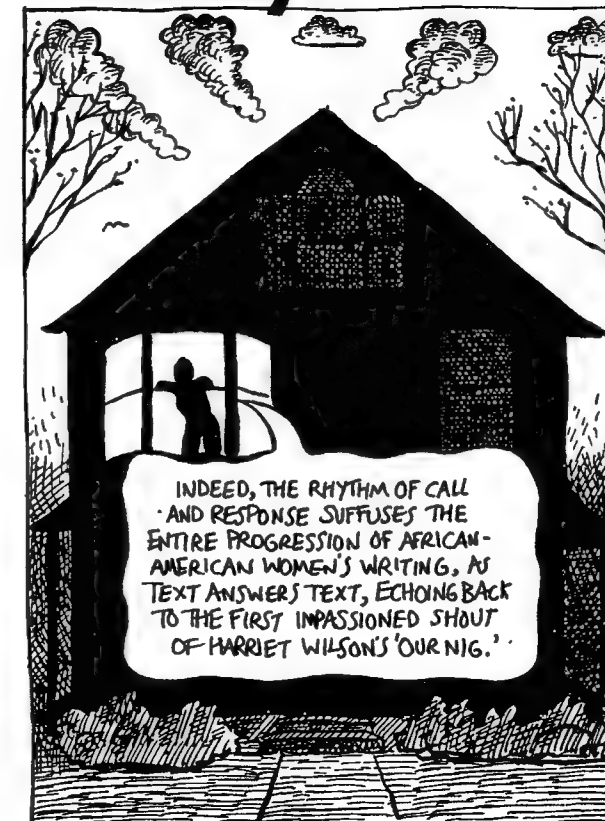




Back at Sydney's...

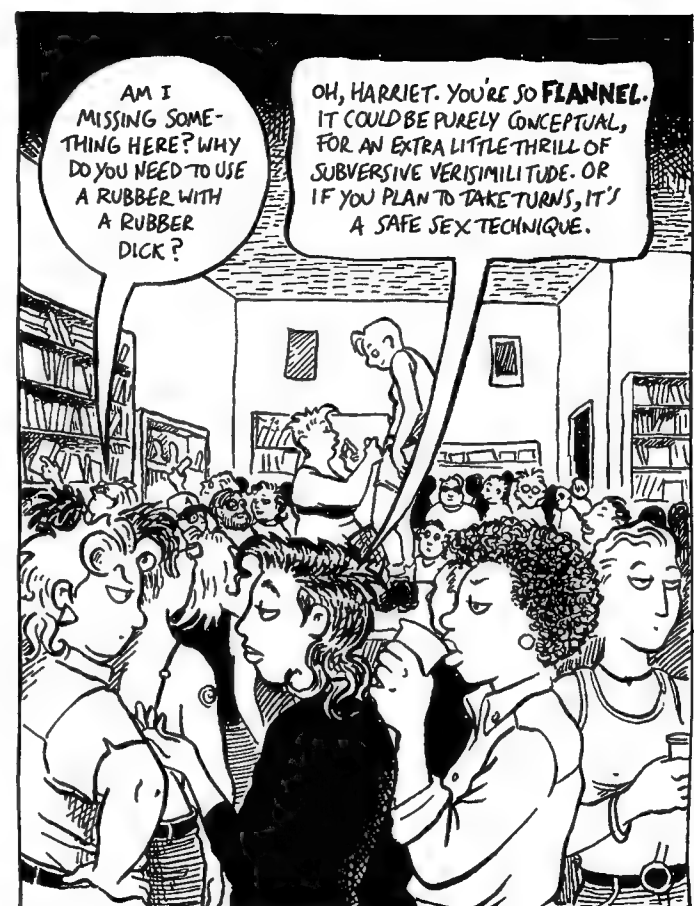


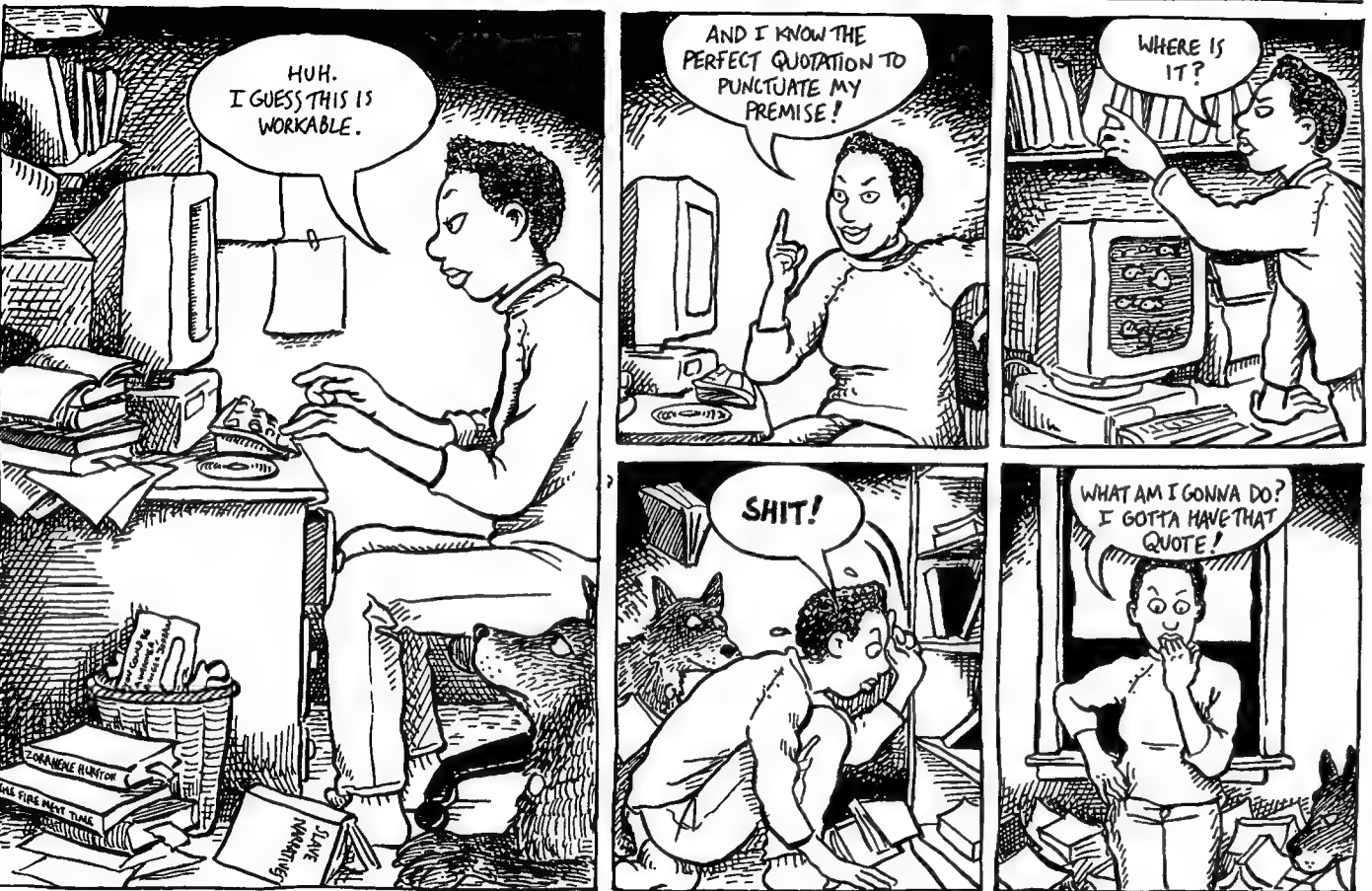
saturday

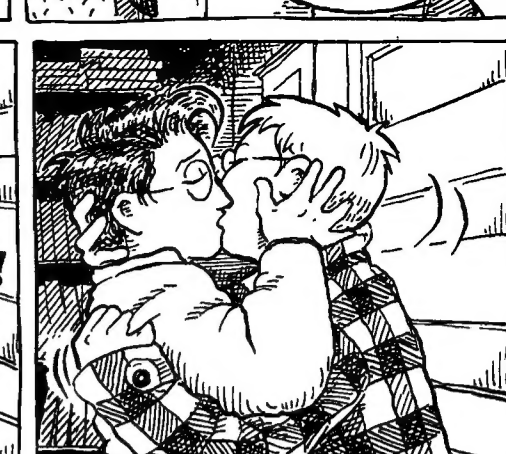
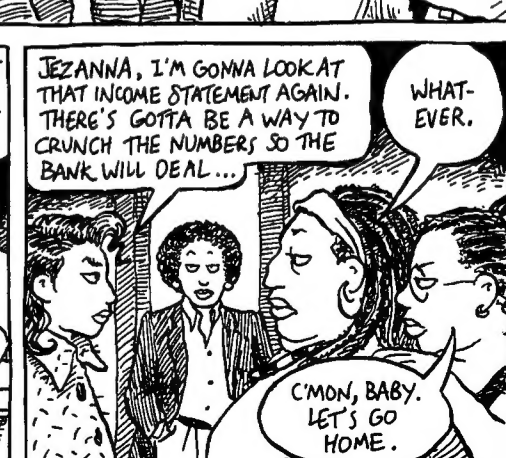


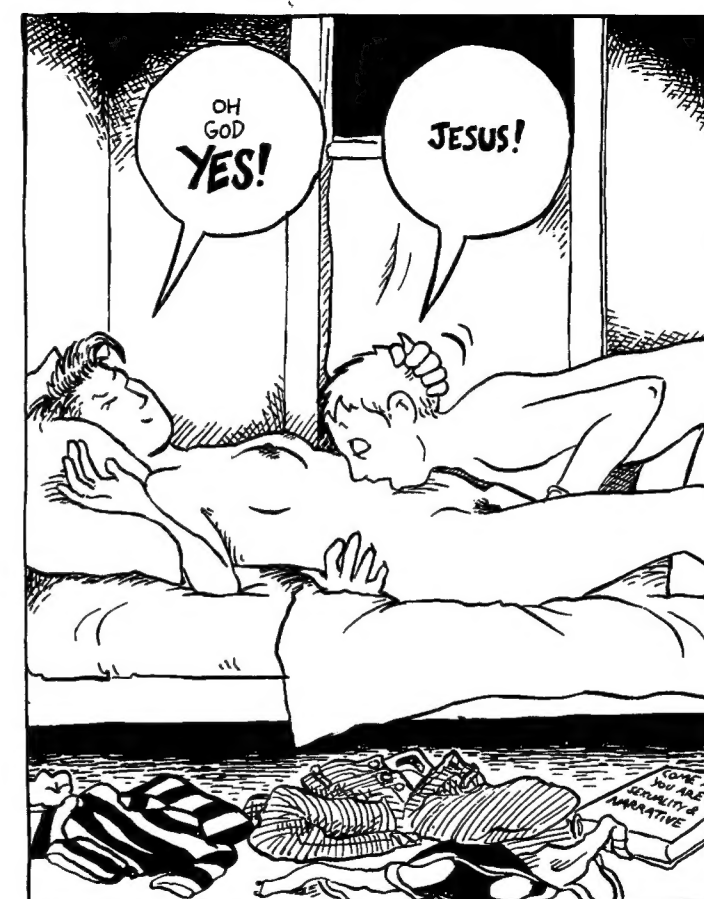
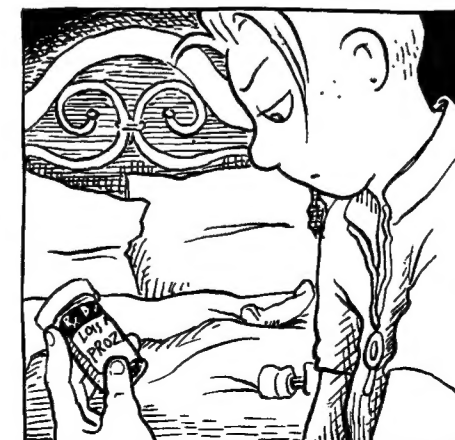
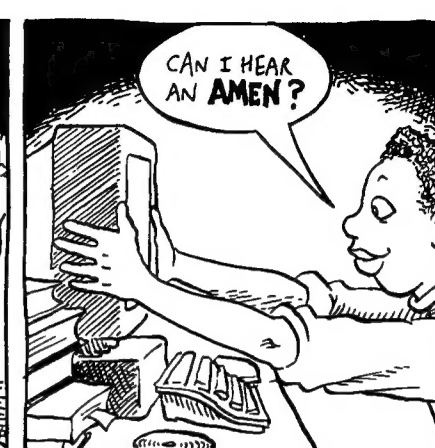
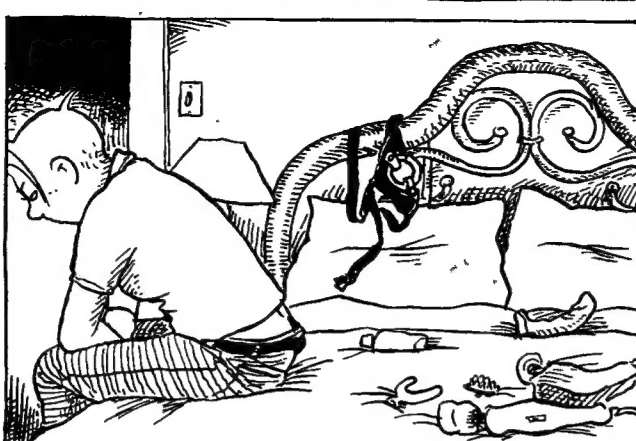
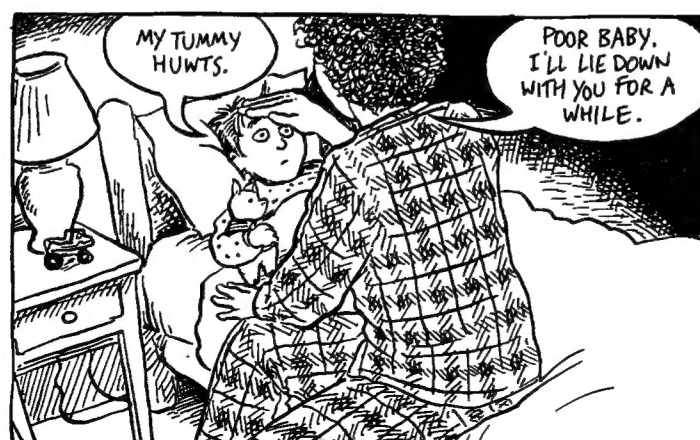


At last, things are getting under way...





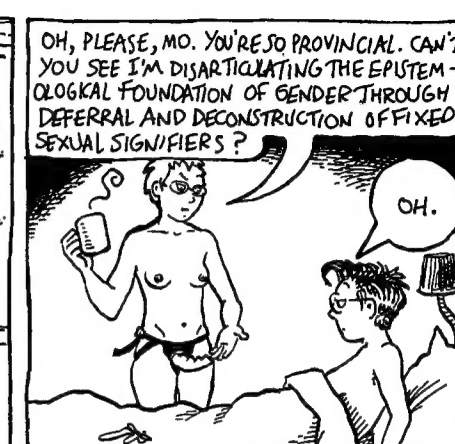




I MADE A MISTAKE! THE NIGHT I PREPARED THE STATEMENT, CLARICE WAS SUPPOSED TO WATCH RAFFI, BUT SHE HAD TO WORK LATE, AND THE **PLUMBER** WAS HERE GETTING THE **DINOSAURS** OUT OF THE TOILET, AND RAFFI WANDERED INTO THE HALL AND FELL DOWN THE STAIRS JUST AS MY **MOTHER** CALLED TO SEE IF I'D GOTTEN THE BROCHURE SHE SENT FROM ONE OF THOSE **RELIGIOUS** GROUPS THAT CLAIM TO TURN GAY PEOPLE STRAIGHT, AND I GUESS IN ALL THE EXCITEMENT I MANAGED TO ENTER SOME ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE INTO THE **PAYABLE** COLUMN!



sunday



monday

